



Accessibility Plan

FY 08/09

Progress Report

The Accessibility Committee meets regularly and more often as needs arise. Membership consists of representation from each department/program with both direct service workers and management staff represented. A person receiving services is also a member of the committee.

Listed Below is several barriers that are outlined in the Accessibility Plan (08) and the progress made towards removing the identified barriers.

Barriers that were identified and corrective actions taken:

Architectural

BARRIERS

The Accessibility Committee developed a barrier checklist using an ADA document as a guide. Surveys were then completed at the EPI main office and EPI licensed facilities. The committee used the surveys to assist with identifying architectural barriers within the organization and to ascertain where the agency stood regarding ADA requirements. Regarding licensed facilities, CHOICE Day Program, Employment Services, and EPI-operated sites, personal accommodations for individuals have been made as needed.

EPI's Maintenance Department and Accessibility Committee have been made aware of several modifications involving property and maintenance that need to occur in order for homes of persons served and facilities to be more accessible to them.

Evacuation procedures for persons with disabilities need to be evaluated internally and externally.

Progress Report

Some modifications that EPI's maintenance Department have made include:

- House 1: Modify client's bed in order to mount handrail to side for client to use to help get in and out of bed.

- House 2: Cut basement wall to install an egress window and make ladder for client to exit house in case of an emergency.
- House 3: Install concrete between two doors so an individual in wheelchair can go back and forth.
- House 3: Modify ramp bottom and install slip-proof plate.
- House 4: Install grab bar above tub handles to assist clients getting in and out of tub.
- House 5: Add handrails to kitchen cupboard doors to make it more accommodating for individuals to open and close.
- House 6: Install a second handrail on opposite side of steps from the bathroom up to the steps to the kitchen.

Attitudinal

BARRIERS

Due to personal biases and values, barriers are sometimes created for individuals served related to sexuality and intimacy issues. EPI recognizes the need for additional education around this issue for both internal and external stakeholders

Progress Report

EPI has begun providing ongoing training (Circles Curriculum) and support to staff members regarding relationships, sexuality, and intimacy issues. With this training provided, staff will gain a better understanding on how to help persons served make informed decisions.

Environmental

BARRIERS

The Waterloo/Cedar Falls metro area presents challenges to persons with disabilities, such as improper curbing, short timing of traffic lights, traffic flow, and crosswalks, in addition to the lack of sidewalks in the community. These barriers create potential safety concerns. Pedestrians with disabilities are unable to travel safely from their homes to the grocery stores, pharmacy, and medical appointments. A specific example is listed below:

- Crosswalk located on University Avenue is unsafe for pedestrians to cross. Barriers associated with accessible sidewalk access route between CHOICE and Platt's (University Avenue).

Progress Review

The Waterloo City Council approved spending funds from the ADA Compliance Commission for a company to design a walkway and for the construction of the walkway. The Department of Transportation is redesigning University Ave. at the same time. Therefore, the plan is for the government entities to collaborate.

The walkway will connect with the pedestrian walkway already designed and paid for by the ADA Compliance Commission, which ends at the east side of the bridge that goes over Green Hill Road. The proposed sidewalk would start at the west side of the bridge and parallel Green Hill Road all the way to the cross walk at the intersection of the entrance and exit ramps with

Green Hill. From there the walkway goes along the south side of the YMCA parking lot to the strip of land between the access road and University Ave. The intersection in front Platt's will be made into a pedestrian crosswalk across University Ave., extending the time of the pedestrian crossing light to facilitate pedestrians. From there the walkway will be placed along the access road, ultimately connecting to the Deery Center. Part of the City Council's rationale to approve this plan is improved access to shopping on both sides of University Ave. for pedestrians and bus users.

Financial

BARRIERS

Within many human service organizations, financial barriers are created by a lack of adequate funding for services at the county and state levels. This affects the reimbursement rates for services and the ability to maintain reasonable and competitive pay for employees. Concerns also arise around the ability to maintain quality services with system financing reductions. In the Community Living Services (children's program), there are many children that do not qualify for funding due to diagnosis, resulting in hardship for many families. This barrier is ongoing in nature and EPI feels strongly that system financing should continue to be addressed as a barrier to quality service.

Progress Review

EPI has maintained involvement in the National ANCOR Association, as well as the Iowa Association of Community Providers. Both Associations are actively involved in legislative initiatives that focus on increased funding for providers.

Communication

BARRIERS

Participant handbooks are not available in electronic format. Agency web site is not fully accessible to people who are blind, have low vision, or who are learning disabled.

Progress Review

EPI's website was updated this past six months. It is now much more user-friendly and provides many additional features. The new website enables users to obtain information on all services offered by EPI.