



## **ACCESSIBILITY PLAN AND POLICIES FOR MS SOCIETY OF CANADA 2014-2021**

This 2014-21 accessibility plan outlines the policies and actions that the MS Society of Canada will put in place to improve opportunities for people with disabilities.

### **Statement of Commitment**

The MS Society of Canada is committed to accessibility and we give people of all abilities opportunities to participate fully in everyday life. We treat everyone with respect and dignity and use reasonable efforts to ensure that our policies and procedures are consistent with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act's core principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity.

### **Accessibility Standards for Customer Service**

The MS Society of Canada has developed our Customer Service Plan as a Policy Direction and posted it on our website at <https://beta.mssociety.ca/uploads/files/policies/accessibility-standards-for-customer-service.pdf>.

### **Accessible Emergency Information**

The MS Society of Canada is committed to providing customers and clients with publicly available emergency information in an accessible way upon request. We will also provide employees with disabilities individualized emergency response information when necessary.

### **Training**

The MS Society of Canada will provide training to employees, volunteers and others who deal with the public on our behalf, and all those who are involved in the development and approvals of customer service policies, practices and procedures. Training will be provided in a way that best suits these roles.

The MS Society of Canada will take the following steps to ensure employees are provided with the training needed to meet Ontario's accessible laws by January 1, 2015:

- Identify training requirements and include training in the MS Society of Canada's Policy Direction for Accessibility Standards for Customer Service.
- Identify and make available training and tracking resources to meet requirements for employees and volunteers.
- Provide training when changes are made to our policies, practices and procedures.

### **Information and communications**

The MS Society of Canada is committed to meeting the communication needs of people with disabilities. We will consult with people with disabilities to determine their information and communication needs.

At January 1, 2014, the MS Society will be partway through the redevelopment of its website which is national in scope with some aspects that can be tailored for provincial Divisions. Wherever possible, the MS Society incorporates WCAG 2.0 standards into its existing website and will take the following steps to make its new website and content on the site conform with WCAG 2.0, Level A.

- Obtain and review WCAG 2.0 Level A Standards
- In redesign, ensure that WCAG 2.0 Level A requirements are incorporated into development and ready for anticipated launch date of 2014/15.
- Whenever possible, pilot test features and enhancements and use feedback to inform next steps.
- Review compliance with WCAG 2.0 Level A as phases are developed.
- Implement Browse Aloud technology that makes web content available in accessible formats to any website visitor who requires online reading support. This includes individuals who prefer to listen to information instead of reading it, individuals with mild visual impairments or dyslexia, and those with English as a second language.

The MS Society will take the following steps to make ensure existing feedback processes are accessible to people with disabilities upon request by January 1, 2015:

- Designate a contact email and toll-free phone extension to receive and ensure that feedback is addressed.
- Establish procedures with a phone extension and email account to receive and respond to feedback.
- Post on our website and make this information available to staff to appropriately inform the public on request.

The MS Society of Canada will take the following steps to ensure all websites and content conform with WCAG 2.0, Level AA by January 1, 2021:

- Obtain and review WCAG 2.0 Level AA Standards.
- In all phases of ongoing website development, ensure that WCAG 2.0 Level AA requirements are incorporated.
- Whenever possible, pilot test features and enhancements and use feedback to inform continuous quality improvement .
- Review compliance with WCAG 2.0 Level AA as phases are developed.
- Monitor regular public feedback channels for input.

### **Employment**

The MS Society of Canada is committed to fair and accessible employment practices. By January 1, 2016 we will take the following steps to notify the public and staff that, when requested, the MS Society of Canada will accommodate people with disabilities during the recruitment and assessment processes:

- Notify employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities in our recruitment processes, by including a statement of commitment to being an equal opportunity employer and adhering to the fair employment practices in accordance to the Ontario Human Rights Code and Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 to our internal and external job postings.
- During a recruitment process, if a selected applicant requests an accommodation, the Society will consult with that individual to provide or arrange for suitable accommodation to the best of our organization's ability, in a manner that takes into account the applicant's disability.

- Maintain interview questions that are respectful of persons with disabilities.
- The Society shall provide the information regarding our internal accessibility policies and practices for new employees as soon as practicable after they begin their employment.

The MS Society of Canada will assist employees with disabilities by providing reasonable accommodation without causing undue hardship to the Society. We have existing Policy Direction “Accommodation for Employees with Disabilities” that is available to all staff and posted on our website at: <https://beta.mssociety.ca/uploads/files/accommodationdisabilitypolicyapproved1998-en.pdf> that will be reviewed at minimum every five years.

The MS Society’s nationwide performance management system is a process through which objectives are established and agreed upon by both the manager and the employee. It is through this process that expectations are outlined and feedback and ongoing support are provided for all employees. We will take the following steps to ensure the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities needs are taken into account:

- Our process will assess and support all employees equally and will not differentiate based on disabilities or accommodation requirements.
- Should a disability prevent an employee from fulfilling the position requirements, reasonable attempts will be made to realign responsibilities and/or look for opportunities for redeployment to a similar level of position within the organization.
- Career development will be supported for all employees and will not be differentiated based on disabilities or accommodation requirements.

The MS Society of Canada will take the following steps to prevent and remove other accessibility barriers identified:

- Maintain awareness of acceptable policy, practice and procedures
- Consult with persons with disabilities and other organizations on an ongoing basis.
- Monitor regular public feedback channels for input.

#### **For more information**

For more information on this accessibility plan, or to receive this document in a free, accessible format, please contact the office of the President Ontario & Nunavut Division at:

- Phone: 1-800.268.7582 x3110
- Email: [accessibilitystandards@mssociety.ca](mailto:accessibilitystandards@mssociety.ca)