Accessibility Plan 2020

Update 12/15/20

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The following plan has been developed to address accessibility barriers that may exist within Pathways Behavioral Health Service Inc (Pathways) and/or the surrounding community. All administrative staff were involved in the creation of the plan. If someone submitted an accessibility barrier form, they were included as well.

A barrier to accessibility is anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully taking a part in society because of their disability. To determine the level at which Pathways influences a barrier-free environment, both within and outside the organization, the following methods are used:

* Frequent and ongoing internal facility programs and policy review.
* Regularly scheduled surveys/program review from external agencies, such as:
  + Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF)
  + Trillium Health Resources
* Solicitation of input from persons served and stakeholders through surveys, planning meetings, and informal conversations.
* Education of persons to report barriers they experience within their homes and community within agency program handbooks, printed brochures, and fliers.
* Availability of Accessibility Barrier Forms at program sites with training on form use at new hire orientation and annually thereafter. These forms are used to help identify barriers within the organization and community

The following plan provides a mechanism for tracking progress toward the removal of identified accessibility barriers in the lives of persons served by Pathways, as well as its employees and other stakeholders. It should be noted the plan does not necessarily include all barriers but does identify trends, patterns, information, and data which support the presence of a particular barrier. This plan, highlights the barriers to be addressed during this fiscal year. Progress and results are analyzed annually and considered during the annual planning process.

**Architectural**

Architectural or “physical” barriers refer to barriers that impede physical access to an environment.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Barrier | Solution | Due Date |
| Deck entry way and ramp to the office are not safely accessible to individuals. | CEO will replace decking boards/railing to ensure safety. | December 31st 2020 This is still ongoing. CEO has replaced most of the deck but there are still some small things to do to finish it but it is safe to walk on. |

**Environmental**

Environmental barriers include any location or characteristic of a setting which compromises,

impedes, or hinders service delivery and the benefits gained from service

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| Barrier | Solution | Due Date |
| Ensuring working equipment, proper lighting, durable medical equipment and no odors | Staff are encourages to report any environmental barriers to their supervisor so that the barrier can be removed. | Continuous |

**Attitudinal**

Attitudinal barriers are behaviors or perceptions which prevent people from communicating properly. Persons with disabilities face attitudinal barriers related to misperceptions of their abilities. Often these attitudes patronize people with disabilities, usually relegating them to low skill or child-like positions.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Barrier | Solution | Due Date |
| Misperceptions of abilities of persons served impact service quality and effectiveness - need to raise internal awareness and acceptance of persons with disabilities | Staff training to promote person centered thinking and at recertification training for crisis prevention. | Annually |
| Provide information to staff through training, hand outs, etc. | Continuous |

**Financial**

Financial barriers include lack of adequate county and state funding for services

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| Barrier | Solution | Due Date |
| Low reimbursement rate offer insufficient funding for services/supports | Exploration of additional resources outside of major funding streams, including fundraising to assist in meeting the needs of persons served. | Continuous |
| Remain active at both the local and state levels in advocating for increased funding to cover the cost of services. | Continuous |
| Limited incomes for persons served result in situations where individuals cannot meet monthly obligations, unusual expenses or one times expenses | Use company finances to assist those who do not have the resources to meet these financial obligations | Continuous |

**Employment**

Employment barriers include those which inhibit people from obtaining or maintaining

Employment

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Barrier | Solution | Due Date |
| Retention of trained, effective staff | Continued focus on staff appreciation/celebration to positively impact staff satisfaction and retention | Continuous |
| Growth in the interest to gain employment and also have back up staff more readily available | Increase opportunity of community employment through connections with job fairs. Also saving all contact information of prospective employees in a database | Continuous |

**Communication**

Communication barriers include the absence of materials needed to adequately communicate with all persons.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Barrier | Solution | Due Date |
| A significant portion staff  work outside of the central  office setting.  Dissemination of  information regarding  such things as forms,  needs of persons served,  employee benefits,  training opportunities, and  open positions presents  challenge to service  consistency. | Pathways communicates with employees on a regular basis through email, texting, phone calls, etc. Expanding of the use of texting will continue to develop a way to do mass texting without it sending everyone’s phone number out to everyone | Continuous |

**Technology**

Technology barriers occur when a technology can’t be modified to support varied assistive.

devices.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Barrier | Solution | Due Date |
| Increase accessibility of QuickBooks in case of an emergency | Pathways will update QuickBooks to allow cloud hosting so that we can sign in on our end since our Bookkeeper lives in a different state. | December 31st 2020, This was completed successfully. |

New Technology Barrier Added to plan

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Barrier | Solution | Due Date |
| Ensure that website supports screen reading software to help individuals with disabilities use the website efficiently to meet their needs. | Pathways will update website to ensure that screen reading is available. | December 31st 2021, |

**Transportation**

Transportation barriers impact persons from participating in the full range of services or access activities in the community.

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| Barrier | Solution | Due Date |
| Inadequate public transportation for persons served limits opportunities to engage in community activity; persons served are unable to access community opportunities in which they are interested | Pathways will continue collaborating with local transportation services and act as advocates for persons with disabilities to encourage the continued expansion of accessible public transportation systems | Continuous |

**Community Integration**

Community Integration barriers include those which keep persons served from fully participating within their community.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Barrier | Solution | Due Date |
| Persons served live within community but do not reach full potential of belonging to community | Encourage and assist persons served with accessing volunteering opportunities to build social capitol within the community | Continuous |

**Other Barriers**

Barriers identified by Pathways persons served, staff, or stakeholders within the community (identified through Accessibility Barrier Forms). While improvements have been made, the Trillium Health Resources catchment area presents challenges to persons with disabilities which create potential safety concerns

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| Barrier | Solution | Due Date |
| As identified through submission of Accessibility Barrier Forms | A representative from Pathways will address issues and concerns with business owners, cities, etc, to seek improvement where needed | Continuous |

Identified Barriers in 2020 by staff or person served

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Barrier | Solution | Due Date |
| Environment Barrier: Client needs “sand” bed so that bed sores do not develop | QP contacted Carolina Home medical to rent a bed for the individual. | 12/31/20 Completed in 2020 |

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| Barrier | Solution | Due Date |
| Technology Barrier: Have form on website for accessibility concerns to be submitted | Director will put a form on the company website for people to submit accessibility concerns | 12/31/20, Completed in 2020 |

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**ACCESSIBILITY BARRIER REPORT FORM**

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ LOCATION:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

What is the nature of the barrier? (see page two for definitions) Circle all that may apply.

Architectural Environmental Attitudes Finances

Employment Communication Technology Transportation

Community Integration

Describe the accessibility barrier?

Do you have a suggestion on how to remove the accessibility barrier?

Reported by:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Please send this form to the Director by:

Email: [office@pbhsinc.com](mailto:office@pbhsinc.com); or

Fax: 252-745-7750; or

Mail: 594 Halls Creek Rd New Bern NC 28560

**BARRIER DEFINITIONS**

ARCHITECTURAL OR PHYSICAL BARRIERS – These are generally easy to identify and may include steps that prevent access to a building for an individual who uses a wheelchair, narrow doorways that need to be widened, bathrooms that need to made accessible, the absence of light alarms for individuals who have a hearing impairment, and the absence of signs in Braille for individuals who have visual impairments.

ENVIRONMENTAL BARRIERS – Environmental barriers can be interpreted as any location or characteristic of the setting that compromises, hinders, or impedes service delivery and the benefits to be gained. Environmental barriers in a person’s home environment might be addressed, for example, by installing computer controls for temperature, lights, window shades, that are activated by a puff straw. In a work environment, lighting may be a barrier if, for instance, fluorescent lighting is used and the flicker precipitates seizure activity in an individual.

ATTITUDINAL BARRIERS – Attitudinal barriers may include, but are not limited to: terminology and language that the organization uses in its literature or when it communicates with persons with disabilities, other stakeholders, and the public; how persons with disabilities are viewed and treated by the organization, their families, and the community; if input of persons served is invited and used.

EMPLOYMENT BARRIERS - Providing flexibility in the workplace (e.g. considering requests for flex time, or part time work) can help many persons with disabilities better manage their needs. With appropriate use employment barriers can be removed for individuals with disabilities.

COMMUNICATION BARRIERS – Communication barriers include the absence of a teletype machine (TTY) or the absence of materials in a language or format that is understood by the persons served.

TRANSPORTATION BARRIERS – Transportation barriers include persons being unable to reach service locations or being unable to participate in the full range of services and activities offered.

FINANCES--Financial barriers include lack of adequate county and state funding for services.

TECHNOLOGY-- Technology barriers occur when a technology can’t be modified to support varied assistive devices.

COMMUNITY INTEGRATION-- Community Integration barriers include those which keep persons served from fully participating within their community