



MOBILITY, FLEXIBILITY, AND DEXTERITY



GCworkplace Consultation Series on Accessibility

PRELIMINARY REPORT – MOBILITY, FLEXIBILITY, AND DEXTERITY

LAST UPDATED: JUNE, 2021

DEPARTMENT: ACCOMMODATION MANAGEMENT AND WORKPLACE SOLUTIONS, REAL PROPERTY SERVICES, PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT CANADA



Table of contents

Introduction	3
Sessions statistics	4
Participating departments.....	4
Participating regions and cities.....	5
Comments.....	5
CURRENT WORKPLACES.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
The process for getting accommodations.....	6
Meeting rooms and common areas that were not accessible	6
A lack of support or understanding of invisible disabilities	6
A lack of centralized support for people with disabilities	6
A lack of training for managers	6
DREAM WORKPLACE.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Having the choice of different workpoints	8
Rapid accommodations and adaptation for disabilities	8
Offices that were designed with inclusivity and accessibility in mind	9
POTENTIAL BARRIERS	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Doors and entrances.....	9
Bathrooms.....	10
Meeting rooms	10
Common areas	11
Summary of Feedback.....	12



Introduction

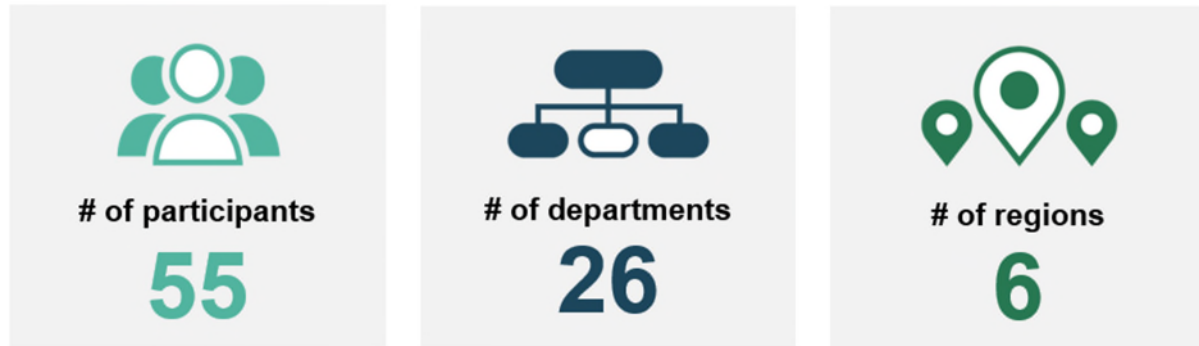
The GCworkplace Consultation Series on Accessibility was created as part of the mandate of the Centre for GCworkplace Innovation, which is to foster knowledge transfer and innovation as well as develop new concepts and tools for the Government of Canada (GC) workplace in collaboration with GC departments, agencies, and external partners. It was also created following the GC's priority and commitment towards accessibility by partnering with key stakeholders.

The GCworkplace Consultation Series on Accessibility consisted of a series of virtual workshops with persons with various types of disabilities (visible and invisible) to discuss and understand their needs in the workplace. A total of 14 sessions (seven in English and seven in French) were originally organized; due to high demand, additional sessions were added for certain disabilities. Through engagement and consultation with users of workplaces, each session addressed existing and emerging or potential workplace barriers for a specific type of disability including mobility issues, cognitive impairments, learning disabilities, environmental sensitivity, visual impairments, hearing impairments, and psychological and mental health.

The first two sessions, attended by persons with mobility, flexibility, and dexterity disabilities, were held on September 16 (in French) and September 23 (in English). Following the success of the first sessions, two new sessions were held, both in English, on January 19 and February 9, 2021.

Sessions statistics

For Mobility, flexibility, and dexterity disabilities sessions held on September 16 and 23, 2020, and January 19 and February 9, 2021.



PARTICIPATING DEPARTMENTS

- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
- Canadian Revenue Agency
- Canada School of Public Service
- Canadian Border Services Agency
- Canadian Human Rights Commission
- Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission
- Canadian Space Agency
- Correctional Services Canada
- Department of Justice Canada
- Employment and Social Development Canada
- Environment and Climate Change Canada
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada
- Global Affairs Canada
- Health Canada
- Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada
- Natural Resources Canada
- Parks Canada
- Public Health Agency of Canada
- Public Safety Canada
- Public Service Commission
- Public Service and Procurement Canada
- Statistics Canada



- Transport Canada
- Treasury Board Secretariat
- Veterans Affairs Canada
- Women and Gender Equality Canada

PARTICIPATING REGIONS AND CITIES

- **National Capital Area**
- **Western** (Wasagaming, Edmonton & Winnipeg)
- **Atlantic** (Sydney, St. John & Halifax)
- **Quebec** (Montreal, St-Jean-sur-Richelieu & St-Hubert)
- **Ontario** (Toronto & Mississauga)
- **Pacific** (Vancouver)

Comments

CURRENT WORKPLACES

Participants were asked to share their thoughts on their current workplaces—what works, what doesn't—as well as to imagine their dream workplaces. They were also walked through what a GCworkplace might look like and asked about potential barriers in specific parts of a workplace.





When asked about their current workplaces, several participants appreciated their powered sit-stand desks. One participant, who requires a sit-stand desk, noted that their current workplace was the most inclusive one they had ever worked in as it was the first one they had ever worked in where every employee had a sit-stand desk. The participant commented that it was the first time they felt included instead of standing out because their desk was different, and suggested that this approach—where everyone has sit-stand desks, dual monitors, etc—both is more inclusive and removes barriers for employees with disabilities.

Participants also appreciated having spaces for collaboration, access to Microsoft Teams for easier videoconferencing, and touchless doors that opened automatically.

In general, however, participants felt that their current workplaces did not deal well with disabilities or the need for accommodations. Several common concerns arose.

The process for getting accommodations

Participants were concerned about how long it can take to get even basic accommodations, such as ergonomic equipment. Several participants noted that managers, in particular middle managers, were a huge barrier to getting accommodations as they would decline or try to modify accommodation requests, even when that meant disregarding doctor's recommendations. Participants were frustrated that obtaining accommodations depended entirely on their manager, instead of being standardized regardless of who their manager was.

Meeting rooms and common areas that were not accessible

Participants frequently spoke of meeting rooms that weren't accessible. They were frustrated that even when they had accommodations for their workstations, the meeting rooms they were supposed to use were not accessible. This will be discussed in more detail below.

A lack of support or understanding of invisible disabilities

Participants felt that there were significant barriers for people with invisible disabilities, such as challenges with flexibility or dexterity. They felt that they were regularly forced to justify and defend their requests for accommodations in a way that wasn't required for visible disabilities. They were also concerned that the type of accommodations they received—for example, being the only team member with a sit-stand desk—may require them to disclose their disability to people who otherwise would not have needed to know.

A lack of centralized support for people with disabilities

Participants were frustrated by the piecemeal approach to accommodations. They noted that many departments don't have a specific accessibility team, meaning that any discussions around accessibility aren't centralized even within a department, let alone across departments. They also felt that it would be helpful to have a centralized list of available accommodation options, as otherwise they may remain unaware of services that could be helpful—one participant mentioned only recently learning about a tool that could help them take notes.

A lack of training for managers



Participants commented that, while managers are responsible for accommodations, most managers are not properly trained to deal with requests for accommodations, particularly for people with invisible disabilities. Several participants noted that managers should have both initial training on accommodations as well as supplemental training when someone with a particular disability was joining their team.



DREAM WORKPLACES



When asked about their vision for their dream workplaces, participants listed practical improvements that would make workplaces work for them.

Having the choice of different workpoints

Participants wanted to be able to choose the best location for themselves without anxiety about whether they would get a suitable workpoint. They also wanted the flexibility to work from home without having to justify that decision, and they wanted access to the same accommodations at home as at the office to allow them to have a real choice about where they could work

Rapid accommodations and adaptation for disabilities

Participants were tired of having to always justify their requests for accommodations and defend themselves to managers or supervisors, particularly those participants with invisible disabilities. They wanted quick, standardized responses to requests for accommodation, instead of leaving the decisions up to individual managers.



Offices that were designed with inclusivity and accessibility in mind

Participants wished that offices would be inclusive and accessible from the beginning, instead of having to request changes or adaptations later. This included having such things as multiple universal accessible washrooms, adequate space to manoeuvre wheelchairs, and accessible doors for buildings, meeting rooms, and washrooms.

POTENTIAL BARRIERS



Participants were asked for feedback about barriers in different parts of the workplace, as well as what they would like to see instead in those places. Some common barriers were identified.

Doors and entrances

Doors came up frequently, with good reason—as one participant pointed out, “if you can’t get through the door, then the rest doesn’t matter”. Many participants commented that the doors for their buildings, floors, and bathrooms either didn’t have automatic doors at all or else that the buttons to open them were regularly broken. Several also noted that when they need to open the door manually, it causes physical pain and fatigue that affects the rest of their day. Participants had also observed some non-disabled people using their feet to push the buttons which, aside from potentially damaging the buttons, can make them dirty and unpleasant to touch. When it came to entrances, participants noted that ramps could be so steep it wasn’t possible for them to navigate them in a manual wheelchair, so slick their wheelchair would slide, and so narrow it wasn’t possible for another person to walk beside the person in the wheelchair,



making them feel isolated from their colleagues. Some participants worked in buildings that had stairs with power lifts and found using these lifts to be awkward and embarrassing.

For manual doors, participants noted that the less complex the interaction the better—doors with knobs that you have to twist as you push or pull are more difficult than something that you can just grab and pull in the same motion. Sliding doors were discussed, but many participants commented that people with lower strength or with certain kinds of wheelchairs would find them difficult to use. For automatic doors at security points, several participants recommended having proximity readers that detect security passes, so that employees don't have to try to scan their pass or their phone while juggling their belongings and possibly crutches or other mobility aids. For entrances, participants wanted ramps with a grade of steepness that allowed them to navigate the ramp in manual wheelchairs. They noted that ramps should have good grip to prevent slippage and that they should be wide enough for multiple people to go on the ramp together. Participants noted that all buildings should have ramps, not power lifts, and that if there were power lifts they should be smooth, usable by one person, and not too high.

Bathrooms

Bathrooms were another area where participants felt there were significant barriers. In several cases, participants noted that the closest bathroom to their office did not have an automatic door or an accessible stall, meaning that they had to travel further to use the bathroom. They felt that there were not enough accessible stalls or gender inclusive washrooms and that the ones that did exist were rarely available since there were so few of them. They also noted that even supposedly accessible stalls were often not, whether it was due to doors that opened inward, a lack of support bars to help people transfer from their wheelchairs, or insufficient space to manoeuvre their wheelchairs.

Participants described their ideal bathroom as one that had its users in mind when it was designed, instead of one that was constructed to the bare minimum required. Features that were mentioned included closed stalls with plenty of space for wheelchair users to be able to manoeuvre and for people who have attendants; support bars on either side of the toilet that are as long as the toilet seat; raised toilets; hooks at various heights for hanging bags or jackets; automatic dispensers for water, soap, and paper towel; automatic flush systems for those who have difficulty flushing; sharps disposal containers for people who take injectable medications during the day; and a lock button near the toilet so that people can lock the door after their attendant leaves. Participants also stressed that there needed to be plentiful accessible washrooms so that they were able to find one when they needed.

Meeting rooms

As mentioned in the section about current workplaces, participants identified meeting rooms as being frequently inaccessible. A common issue was that meeting rooms tend to have too many chairs, meaning that almost every meeting was forced to start with rearranging the chairs to allow people with wheelchairs to access the table. Participants also noted that the type of chair commonly used in meeting rooms is not good for people who may want to transfer from their



wheelchairs to the meeting room chairs—chairs that rolled or had fixed arm rests make it difficult for people with mobility issues to use them safely. Furthermore, meeting rooms were often too small to allow people to park their wheelchairs even if they were able to transfer to a meeting room chair, and the room size could also make it difficult for people with wheelchairs to turn around to leave.

Participants suggested having at least one designated spot in each meeting room for people with wheelchairs, possibly marked with signage. They also suggested having plugs and other connections available at the front of the table instead of under or in the middle of the table to make it easier to access these outlets. Since many participants carry items such as tablets or notebooks to meetings, they wanted to be able to get into the space without having to set their items down to open doors or manoeuvre around obstacles. Participants also noted that there should be a variety of types of chairs available in meeting rooms, so that those who have chronic pain (such as arthritis or fibromyalgia) can choose chairs that are less likely to aggravate their condition, while those who would like to transfer from their wheelchairs or who suffer from balance issues can choose chairs more suitable for their conditions.

Common areas

Participants pointed out multiple barriers in common areas such as kitchens, lockers, and entrance areas where people remove their coats and boots. Kitchens were frequently small and cluttered, making it hard for participants to manoeuvre their wheelchairs around tables and chairs. Participants also noted that the space under sinks or counters, which they need to pull their wheelchairs up close, was often blocked or filled with items such as garbage cans. Lockers were sometimes difficult to open, particularly for those with dexterity issues or lower strength, and they were also not large enough to accommodate items such as crutches or canes. When it came to storing coats and boots, entrance areas often had hooks or hangers that were too high, and some participants noted that coat closet doors could be a challenge. In addition, there was often nowhere to sit to remove boots or change shoes.

Participants suggested having benches of various heights for people to use, as people with different disabilities and physical statures would find different bench heights more helpful. Hooks were generally seen as easier to use than hangers and were also recommended to be placed at different heights. Participants also noted that there should be somewhere for them to put canes or crutches while they were removing their coats or boots. They recommended that lockers be large enough to not only accommodate canes or crutches, but also for people to leave belongings such as laptops, as carrying laptops back and forth from home was challenging for several participants. Participants commented that lockers shouldn't be too far from workstations and that they should be widely spaced to make it easier for people with mobility devices to access them. In kitchens, participants strongly recommended having adjustable counters with space to rest belongings while they prepared their food. They also suggested having sinks of different sizes and heights and having at least one fridge with the freezer on the bottom.



Summary of Feedback

Symbol	Meaning
--------	---------



The green checkmark icon means: this has been addressed by GCworkplace.



The yellow line icon means: this has partially been addressed by GCworkplace.





The red x icon means: this has not been addressed by GCworkplace.



The blue asterisk icon means: this is outside the scope of GCworkplace.



Issue/Barrier Raised	Already addressed by GCworkplace or others?	OPI	Explanation	Status Date	Future Improvements
No choice of workpoints		PSPC – GCworkplace Team	<p>Workpoints are distributed to OPTIMIZE the workplace and reflect the functions of the organizations. Workpoints are not assigned or designed for individuals but rather for the optimum functionality of the workplace. The users have the freedom to choose their preferred work setting</p> <p>For more information: GCworkplace Design Guide - Part 3 Design Development, Section 3.2</p>	December 2020	
Choice of workpoints only available at certain times (e.g. early in the morning)		PSPC – GCworkplace Team	<p>Taking into considerations lessons learned from Workplace 2.0, GCworkplace is equipped with a large number of different workpoints. Users have the freedom to choose their preferred workpoints and setting according to their needs and preferences. As everyone is different, users should be able to find a workpoint that suits their needs.</p> <p>In some departments, it is also possible to reserve your workpoint in advance.</p>	December 2020	






Issue/Barrier Raised	Already addressed by GCworkplace or others?	OPI	Explanation	Status Date	Future Improvements
Loss of privacy		PSPC – GCworkplace Team	<p>Focus Work and Refuge: GCworkplace design focuses on improving access to visual and acoustic privacy. By recognizing that all employees can benefit from an environment that supports focus work or time to recharge, GCworkplace is designed to support all occupants.</p> <p>For more information: GCworkplace Design Guide, Part 2 Key Design Principles, Section 2.4.2</p>	December 2020	
Too much noise		PSPC – GCworkplace Team	<p>Taking into consideration lessons learned from Workplace 2.0, GCworkplace is divided into 3 distinctive zones: a quiet zone, a transitional zone, and a collaborative zone. The quiet and collaborative zones are usually at opposite sides of a floor and are composed of various enclosed or open workpoints. The transitional zone is the one that allows the other two to co-exist.</p> <p>For more information: GCworkplace Design Guide - Design Guide</p>	December 2020	






Issue/Barrier Raised	Already addressed by GCworkplace or others?	OPI	Explanation	Status Date	Future Improvements
Part 2 Key Design Principles					
Length of time to get accommodations		PSPC – GCworkplace Team AND Departments HR Branches	GCworkplace removes part of this issue as many requirements are already in the space (height adjustable desks, ergonomic chairs, etc.). By integrating accessibility at the beginning of the design phase, GCworkplace is promoting an inclusive, equitable, and adaptive workplace.	December 2020	Transfer consultation results to departments to see how they can facilitate and accelerate accommodation requests.
Hard sometimes to know in advance where some things are located (para transport spots, elevators, bathrooms, etc.)		Office of Accessibility in the Built Environment (OABE) - PSPC	OABE is currently piloting and researching interactive signage such as beacons, QR Codes and NFC tags to help users navigate more effortlessly through buildings.	December 2020	
Accommodation for non-visible disabilities are harder to get or are not thought of automatically like visible disabilities		Departments HR Branches		December 2020	Transfer consultation results to departments to see how they can change the way non-visible disabilities are dealt with.






Issue/Barrier Raised	Already addressed by GCworkplace or others?	OPI	Explanation	Status Date	Future Improvements
Need to always justify accommodation requests		Departments HR Branches	Doctor's notes or ergonomic assessments are often questioned by managers.	December 2020	Transfer consultation results to departments to see how they can change the way accommodation requests are processed.
Assistive technology such as sit-stand desks, adjustable monitors, ergonomic chairs, and noise-cancelling headphones are not available without special requests for accommodations		PSPC GCworkplace Team	GCworkplace offers for all to use sit-stand desk (usually electric to facilitate usage), various types of adjustable monitors and various models of ergonomic chairs. Employees should be able to find a workpoint that meets their needs without any special accommodation requests. Purchase of noise-cancelling headphones are the responsibility of the department.	January 2021	
Lights are not adjustable at workpoints or in meeting rooms		Office of Accessibility in the Built Environment (OABE) – PSPC	GCworkplace offers task lighting for various workpoints. It also suggest adding dimmable accent lighting for user adjustability. Accessibility tips are mentioned in the Technical Reference Manual.	January 2021	





Issue/Barrier Raised	Already addressed by GCworkplace or others?	OPI	Explanation	Status Date	Future Improvements
<p>AND</p> <p>PSPC GCworkplace Team</p>					
Staffing processes are often not accessible		Departments HR Branches		December 2020	Transfer consultation results to departments to see how they improve staffing processes.
Not enough recruitment of people with disabilities		Departments HR Branches	This is not something fixed by GCworkplace, but the Government of Canada is working on recruiting more people with disabilities by 2025.	December 2020	
Lack of standardized process for accommodations		Departments HR branches, Office of Public Service Accessibility (OPSA) and maybe Shared Services	The Government of Canada (GC) Workplace Accessibility Passport might help solve this issue, at least partially. The Passport is a tool (yet to be launched) to create a more inclusive and accessible workplace by facilitating conversations between employees and their managers about the tools and supports employees need to succeed in their jobs. The Passport will support employee mobility and career development by	December 2020	Verify when the passport will be launched. Transfer consultation results to departments and to OPSA and SSC to see what they are working on that could help with the issue.






Issue/Barrier Raised	Already addressed by GCworkplace or others?	OPI	Explanation	Status Date	Future Improvements
		Canada (SSC)	ensuring the portability of adaptive tools and support measures between federal organizations.		
Term employees and students are not treated the same as permanent employees with regard to accommodations		Departments HR Branches		March 2021	Transfer consultation results to departments.
Non-executives are not treated the same as managers with regard to accommodations		Departments HR Branches		June 2021	Transfer consultation results to departments.
Managers are not aware of their obligations to accommodate or of tools to help		Departments HR Branches	The Government of Canada (GC) Workplace Accessibility Passport might help solve this issue, at least partially. The Passport is a tool (yet to be launched) to create a more inclusive and accessible workplace by facilitating conversations between employees and their managers about the tools and supports employees need to succeed in their jobs. The Passport will support employee	May 2021	



Issue/Barrier Raised	Already addressed by GCworkplace or others?	OPI	Explanation	Status Date	Future Improvements
			mobility and career development by ensuring the portability of adaptive tools and support measures between federal organizations.		
Managers deny accommodations because they are not aware of how accommodations are funded		Departments HR Branches		May 2021	Transfer consultation results to departments.
No flexibility to work from home without having to justify		Departments HR Branches	Flexibility is one of the seven dimensions of GCworkplace. Flexibility allows employees to work where they will be the most productive for the tasks they have to accomplished, taking in consideration their schedule, preferences and needs. However, each department has their own rules on telework and remote working. During the pandemic, Government of Canada employees have shown that it is possible to be as productive from home as it is from the office.	December 2020	



Issue/Barrier Raised	Already addressed by GCworkplace or others?	OPI	Explanation	Status Date	Future Improvements
Ergonomic equipment isn't available at home (only at office, not both places)		Departments HR Branches		March 2021	Transfer consultation results to departments to see what can be done.
No ability to set own hours or have flexibility with hours		Departments HR Branches	Flexibility is one of the seven dimensions of GCworkplace. Flexibility allows employees to work where they will be the most productive for the tasks they have to accomplished, taking in consideration their schedule, preferences and needs. However, each department have their own rules on telework and remote working. // During the pandemic, Government of Canada employees have shown that it is possible to be as productive from home as it is from the office.	April 2021	Transfer consultation results to departments.
Workpoints are set up so that employees can't see people approaching their desks		PSPC GCworkplace Team	GCworkplace offers a variety of options for everyone and an employee should be able to find many options that accommodate their preference, in this case, seeing people that are approaching their workpoint.	January 2021	Add accessibility tips to the Technical Reference Manual (to be launched in April 2021)



Issue/Barrier Raised	Already addressed by GCworkplace or others?	OPI	Explanation	Status Date	Future Improvements
			<p>However, following the feedback received, we suggest that a best practice would be to include some more enclosed options where the people are facing the door to help with this issue, for example, a focus room where the desk is facing the door.</p> <p>Accessibility tips will be added to the Technical Reference Manual.</p> <p>For more information: GCworkplace Technical Reference Manual</p>		
No or not enough automatic doors		Office of Accessibility in the Built Environment (OABE) – PSPC	Due to the pandemic and other needs that have been identified during research and consultation, OABE is researching options for automatic door openers.	December 2020	
Automatic door buttons are sometimes too small or not well planned		Office of Accessibility in the Built Environment	Due to the pandemic and other needs that have been identified during research and consultation, OABE is researching options for automatic door openers. Where	December 2020	New buildings, new space acquisitions, and fit-up projects will incorporate updated requirements as part of






Issue/Barrier Raised	Already addressed by GCworkplace or others?	OPI	Explanation	Status Date	Future Improvements
		(OABE) – PSPC	applicable, it is recommended to offer vertical push buttons or door sensors.		the design and implementation.
Automatic doors that break and aren't fixed rapidly		PSPC – National Service Call Centre and Property and Facility Management Service Line		December 2020	Transfer consultation results to PSPC's National Service Call Centre and Property and Facility Management Service Line to see if/how they can offer a faster service.
People use their feet to press automatic door buttons, which makes them dirty and can break them		GC employees and PSPC Property and Facility Management Service Line	This is something that needs to be addressed as part of a culture change, not through GCworkplace. As a first step, awareness needs to be made around this issue, through communications and possibly some signage, reminding users on the importance keeping the door functional and clean for users.	May 2021	Transfer consultation results to PSPC's Property and Facility Management Service Line to see if/how they can include some signage. Work on some possible signage to test at the Centre for GCworkplace Innovation and suggest awareness campaign to persons with disability



Issue/Barrier Raised	Already addressed by GCworkplace or others?	OPI	Explanation	Status Date	Future Improvements
					<p>networks throughout the GC.</p> <p>Look into other types of buttons that could help alleviate the issue.</p>
Heavy manual doors		Office of Accessibility in the Built Environment (OABE) – PSPC	CSA B651-18 has a maximum weight requirement for opening a door. OABE is researching options for automatic door openers. Where applicable, it is recommended to offer vertical push buttons or door sensors.	December 2020	New buildings, new space acquisitions, and fit-up projects will incorporate updated requirements as part of the design and implementation.
Accessible doors are often not well placed (have to cut through flow of people to access or go in another direction)		Office of Accessibility in the Built Environment (OABE) – PSPC		December 2020	It is a priority to improve the built environment for people with all disabilities. The first step to achieving this goal is through a consultation process to determine specific user needs. The design solution should suit user needs.
Doors that require twisting a knob as		Office of Accessibility in the Built	CSA B651-18, Figure 21, does not identify a knob handle nor a thumb-latch handle as an acceptable	December 2020	New buildings, new space acquisitions, and fit-up projects will



Issue/Barrier Raised	Already addressed by GCworkplace or others?	OPI	Explanation	Status Date	Future Improvements
well as pushing/pulling		Environment (OABE) – PSPC	accessible hardware. Lever type or push plate/door pulls are acceptable.		incorporate updated requirements as part of the design and implementation.
Some doors have security card readers on one side and automatic door buttons on the other side		Office of Accessibility in the Built Environment (OABE) – PSPC	Based on the CSA B651-18 standard, card readers should be the first device encountered when approaching the secure door. The control of the electric door operator must be located at a maximum horizontal distance of 300 mm from the security card sensor.	June 2021	
Snow removal in the wintertime can be really problematic		PSPC – National Service Call Centre and Property and Facility Management Service Line		December 2020	Transfer consultation results to PSPC's National Service Call Centre and Property and Facility Management Service Line to see if/how they can fix the issue.
Not enough accessible washrooms		Office of Accessibility in the Built Environment (OABE) – PSPC		December 2020	New buildings, new space acquisitions, and fit-up projects will incorporate updated requirements as part of







Issue/Barrier Raised	Already addressed by GCworkplace or others?	OPI	Explanation	Status Date	Future Improvements
No gender-neutral bathrooms		Office of Accessibility in the Built Environment (OABE) – PSPC	PSPC is working toward establishing an approved functional directive for All Access Washroom.	March 2021	the design and implementation.
Bathroom sizes – some are too big, some too small, different sizes for different needs		Office of Accessibility in the Built Environment (OABE) – PSPC	OABE to provide information It is very hard to implement in most existing facilities without reducing the number of washrooms. This could compromise the number of washrooms per floor in existing buildings.	December 2020	Should be considered in new buildings, and where possible in major fit-up and base building improvements.
Having to stand while waiting for the bathroom can be really hard		Office of Accessibility in the Built Environment (OABE) – PSPC	OABE to provide information Where possible, design solution should incorporate a bench or seat adjacent to the washrooms.	December 2020	It is a priority to improve the built environment for people with all disabilities. The first step to achieving this goal is through a consultation process to determine specific user needs. The design solution should suit user needs.




Issue/Barrier Raised	Already addressed by GCworkplace or others?	OPI	Explanation	Status Date	Future Improvements
Washrooms without enough space to manoeuver wheelchairs		Office of Accessibility in the Built Environment (OABE) – PSPC	OABE to provide information	December 2020	New buildings, new space acquisitions, and fit-up projects will incorporate updated requirements as part of the design and implementation.
Washrooms without support bars to transfer to toilet from wheelchair		Office of Accessibility in the Built Environment (OABE) – PSPC	OABE to provide information Grab bars are part of CSA B651-18 for universal washrooms and toilet stalls for users with limited mobility.	December 2020	New buildings, new space acquisitions, and fit-up projects will incorporate updated requirements as part of the design and implementation.
No hooks in washrooms for personal items		Office of Accessibility in the Built Environment (OABE) – PSPC	OABE/PFMSL to provide information CSA B651-18, 6.3.3 Washroom accessories include a shelf or counter within a universal washroom for personal items. CSA B651 also includes a coat hook mounted on a side wall for all accessible washrooms.	December 2020	New buildings, new space acquisitions, and fit-up projects will incorporate updated requirements as part of the design and implementation.
No automatic dispensers for water, soap, paper towel		Office of Accessibility in the Built Environment	OABE to provide information – work in progress due to COVID	December 2020	Where possible, automatic dispensers at reaching distance in a seated position is ideal.





Issue/Barrier Raised	Already addressed by GCworkplace or others?	OPI	Explanation	Status Date	Future Improvements
		(OABE) – PSPC	Application may vary depending on building owner and existing agreements.		
Carpets can be hard for wheelchair users		Office of Accessibility in the Built Environment (OABE) – PSPC	OABE to provide information A design solution for one person with a disability may have a negative impact on another person with a disability. The most inclusive designs are implemented after a thorough consultation with building users.	December 2020	It is a priority to improve the built environment for people with all disabilities. The first step to achieving this goal is through a consultation process.
No sharps disposal containers		Unknown		December 2020	Research who would be the OPI and see how/if this can be put in place.
No lock button near toilet in washrooms		Office of Accessibility in the Built Environment (OABE) – PSPC	OABE to provide information Application may vary depending on building owner and existing agreements. Lock button is best kept away from the toilet to reduce the risk of a user accidentally hitting the button during transfer.	December 2020	
Hallways and kitchens too narrow or cluttered to manoeuvre wheelchairs		Office of Accessibility in the Built Environment	CSA B651-18, 5.1 Accessible route width has increased. An accessible path of travel is now 1700mm minimum wide and aisles are	December 2020	New buildings, new space acquisitions, and fit-up projects will incorporate updated requirements as part of





Issue/Barrier Raised	Already addressed by GCworkplace or others?	OPI	Explanation	Status Date	Future Improvements
		(OABE) – PSPC AND PSPC GCworkplace Team	1000mm min. Doorways are now 850mm. Post-COVID increase in GCworkplace designs. Accessibility tips will be added to the Technical Reference Manual, including space between tables and chairs, between counter tops and tables, etc. For more information: GCworkplace Technical Reference Manual		the design and implementation. Add accessibility tips to the Technical Reference Manual (to be launched in April 2021)
Fridges are often hard to access (French doors are better), too close to walls, only have freezers on top		Office of Accessibility in the Built Environment (OABE) – PSPC AND PSPC GCworkplace Team	CSA B651-18, 7.4.4.8 Refrigerators allows for two different configurations as one option may not meet the needs of all end-users. Accessibility tips will be added to the Technical Reference Manual, including, where possible, the use of refrigerators with French doors to facilitate usage by people with mobility, flexibility, and dexterity issues. For more information: GCworkplace Technical Reference Manual	December 2020	It is a priority to improve the built environment for people with all disabilities. The first step to achieving this goal is through a consultation process to determine specific user needs. Add accessibility tips to the Technical Reference Manual (to be launched in April 2021)





Issue/Barrier Raised	Already addressed by GCworkplace or others?	OPI	Explanation	Status Date	Future Improvements
<p>Location of garbage bins (under towel dispenser for example) blocks access and are hard to move</p>		<p>Office of Accessibility in the Built Environment (OABE) – PSPC</p> <p>AND</p> <p>PSPC GCworkplace Team</p>	<p>Application may vary depending on building owner and existing agreements. Where possible, it is recommended that all dispensers are clear from obstructions. Towel dispensers should be in close proximity to the waste bins and sink without obstruction.</p> <p>Accessibility tips will be added to the Technical Reference Manual.</p> <p>For more information: GCworkplace Technical Reference Manual</p>	<p>December 2020</p>	<p>Add accessibility tips to the Technical Reference Manual (to be launched in April 2021)</p>
<p>No counter close to microwaves</p>		<p>Office of Accessibility in the Built Environment (OABE) – PSPC</p> <p>AND</p>	<p>Examples are shown in CSA B651-18, figure 61 (pg. 165) which depicts two usable heat-resistant work surfaces adjacent to a cooking unit. See example c) pull-out shelf under oven e) pull-out workboard for easy access and use.</p> <p>Accessibility tips will be added to the Technical Reference Manual, including tips on what to look for</p>	<p>December 2020</p>	<p>The design solution should include a heat-resistant counter and/or shelf next to the microwave to allow an individual to set their heated item down while in a seated or standing position.</p>



Issue/Barrier Raised	Already addressed by GCworkplace or others?	OPI	Explanation	Status Date	Future Improvements
		PSPC GCworkplace Team	when purchasing a microwave (door latching side for example) For more information: GCworkplace Technical Reference Manual		Add accessibility tips to the Technical Reference Manual (to be launched in April 2021)
Space under kitchen sinks and counters blocked		Office of Accessibility in the Built Environment (OABE) – PSPC	CSA B651-18, 7.4.4 Kitchens specifies a minimum clear area at the sink which includes leg room and toe kick space for a persons with limited mobility.	December 2020	The design solution should include clearance to suit user needs.
No adjustable counters in kitchens		PSPC GCworkplace Team	It is not within the standards to offer adjustable countertops in kitchens, however, designers are able to offer varied fixed heights in the design solutions. This can include regular height and bar height tables, various heights for microwaves, pull-out shelves, etc. Accessibility tips will be added to the Technical Reference Manual. For more information: GCworkplace Technical Reference Manual	December 2020	Add accessibility tips to the Technical Reference Manual (to be launched in April 2021)



Issue/Barrier Raised	Already addressed by GCworkplace or others?	OPI	Explanation	Status Date	Future Improvements
Access to faucets, often hard to reach		Office of Accessibility in the Built Environment (OABE) – PSPC	CSA B651-18, 7.4.4.4e) requires a lever type operable with closed fist or automatic sensor. Application may vary depending on building owner and existing agreements	December 2020	
Tables in kitchens don't have spaces for wheelchairs		PSPC GCworkplace Team		June 2021	Add accessibility tips to the Technical Reference Manual and discuss furniture specifications with Furniture NCoE.
Lockers not large enough to accommodate canes, crutches, or laptops		PSPC GCworkplace Team	In a GCworkplace environment, Personal Storage Lockers are located outside of individual workpoints, and centralized in areas adjacent to circulation paths for easy access. Quantities and configurations should be determined in conjunction with client consultation. For example, consideration should be given to common items stored such as typical laptop size or other individual storage requirements.	December 2020	Add accessibility tips to the Technical Reference Manual (to be launched in April 2021)
			Accessibility tips will be added to the Technical Reference Manual. Tips		



Issue/Barrier Raised	Already addressed by GCworkplace or others?	OPI	Explanation	Status Date	Future Improvements
			<p>could include adding hooks inside wardrobes and lockers instead of hangers, ensuring hangers are not attached to rods, including different types of lockers to meet the needs of employees.</p> <p>For more information: GCworkplace Technical Reference Manual</p>		
Lockers difficult to open for people with dexterity issues		PSPC GCworkplace Team and possibly PSPC Accessible Procurement Group	Some research and possibly testing would need to be done to find the best solutions. This includes dexterity issues but would also include other types of disabilities (cannot see the lock, cannot remember the combination, etc.)	December 2020	Following the research, add accessibility tips to the Technical Reference Manual (to be launched in April 2021)
Coat rooms/entrance areas do not have benches at all or do not have benches of different heights and sizes		PSPC GCworkplace Team	Chat points are often located close to lockers and entrances which would help in some cases. Accessibility tips will be added to the Technical Reference Manual to indicate seating should be available close to lockers and entrances and that it would be a good practice to offer at least 2 different heights.	December 2020	Following the research, add accessibility tips to the Technical Reference Manual (to be launched in April 2021)






Issue/Barrier Raised	Already addressed by GCworkplace or others?	OPI	Explanation	Status Date	Future Improvements
Benches/banquettes are not comfortable		PSPC GCworkplace Team	<p>GCworkplace offers a variety of seating options for everyone.</p> <p>However, following the feedback received, we suggest that a best practice would be to include other seating choices when possible. For example, in a huddle, there could be a bench on one side and chairs on the other side.</p> <p>Accessibility tips will be added to the Technical Reference Manual.</p> <p>For more information: GCworkplace Technical Reference Manual</p>	December 2020	Add accessibility tips to the Technical Reference Manual (to be launched in April 2021)
More benches throughout the space for people to rest in large spaces		Office of Accessibility in the Built Environment (OABE) – PSPC	Seating areas should be clearly visible and identified with a change in surface materials (texture and colour). Adequate heel space under seating should be provided to allow people to stand up with ease. Variety of seating options should be available to suit different people, such as seats with and without arm rests, seats with backrests.	December 2020	





Issue/Barrier Raised	Already addressed by GCworkplace or others?	OPI	Explanation	Status Date	Future Improvements
			<p>Incorporate clear spaces in seating area for people using wheelchairs, scooters, or strollers so they can sit alongside one another and with their companions. Seating intervals should be every 10 metres, if possible.</p> <p>Sequencing of workpoints from main entry points should follow logical sequence of activities – for example, occupants tend to use lockers first, followed by main supporting spaces such as Kitchenette or Meeting Rooms, then they might choose a shorter-term workpoint (further into the space) or a longer-term workpoint (furthest into the space):</p>		
No place to put canes or crutches while removing boots or jackets in a workpoint		PSPC GCworkplace Team and possibly PSPC Accessible Procurement Group	Some research and possibly testing would need to be done to find the best solutions.	December 2020	Following the research, add accessibility tips to the Technical Reference Manual (to be launched in April 2021)





Issue/Barrier Raised	Already addressed by GCworkplace or others?	OPI	Explanation	Status Date	Future Improvements
Meeting rooms have too many chairs and no space for wheelchairs		PSPC GCworkplace Team	Taking into consideration lessons learned from Workplace 2.0, GCworkplace meeting spaces have plenty of room for a wheelchair user to maneuver easily in the space and to find a spot that will allow them to participate fully in a meeting.	December 2020	
Chairs are not comfortable or ergonomic (no lumbar structure, armrests don't adjust, too high or too low, etc.)		PSPC GCworkplace Team	<p>The medium and long term workpoints all have ergonomic chairs.</p> <p>The choice of the ergonomic chair parameters is left to the customers and the project team as long as they are available in the SA.</p> <p>Accessibility tips will be added to the Technical Reference Manual to suggest having more than one type of ergonomic chair on a floor to allow choice for users.</p> <p>For more information: GCworkplace Technical Reference Manual</p>	December 2020	Add accessibility tips to the Technical Reference Manual (to be launched in April 2021)
Meeting room plugs are in the middle of		PSPC GCworkplace	Research needs to be done to find the best solutions.	December 2020	Following the research, add accessibility tips to





Issue/Barrier Raised	Already addressed by GCworkplace or others?	OPI	Explanation	Status Date	Future Improvements
the table, not near the edge		Team and possibly PSPC Accessible Procurement Group			the Technical Reference Manual (to be launched in April 2021)
Plugs are often hard to reach (in the kitchens, at desks, huddles, etc.)		Office of Accessibility in the Built Environment (OABE) – PSPC AND PSPC GCworkplace Team	CSA 651-18, Figure 61 (pg. 165) depicts an example of an accessible plug located on a vertical surface (wall / cabinetry) near the edge of counter. Refer to Legend: d) Electrical outlet accessible from seated position. On desks, it is now recommended to locate the plug in the front of the desk for easy access.	December 2020	Where functionally acceptable, design solutions should incorporate some electrical outlets near edge of counter or on counter edge for easier access.
Meeting room chairs are not safe for people to transfer from wheelchairs (wheels do not lock, armrest in the way, etc.)		PSPC GCworkplace Team and possibly PSPC Accessible Procurement Group	Research needs to be done to find the best solutions.	December 2020	Following the research, add accessibility tips to the Technical Reference Manual (to be launched in April 2021)






Issue/Barrier Raised	Already addressed by GCworkplace or others?	OPI	Explanation	Status Date	Future Improvements
Meeting rooms are too small to turn wheelchairs around or to park wheelchairs when transferring to another chair		PSPC GCworkplace Team	Taking into consideration lessons learned from Workplace 2.0, GCworkplace meeting spaces have plenty of room for a wheelchair user to maneuver easily in the space and to find a spot that will allow them to participate fully in a meeting.	December 2020	
Meeting room chairs do not get pushed back to the table after use		GC employees	<p>This is not something that GCworkplace can fix, this is a culture issue. GCworkplace wants to work on some potential communication pieces to try to help shift the culture.</p> <p>It would also be interesting to talk about this issue at a GCworkplace Community of Practice and Interest Meeting to get feedback on how best to approach this.</p>	March 2021	This subject will be added as a potential discussion subject for a brainstorming session part of the GCworkplace Accessibility Community of Practice and Interest .
Tables in meeting rooms and common areas are too high		PSPC GCworkplace Team	<p>Meeting room's table heights follow CSA standards for accessibility.</p> <p>Common areas and other open collaborative workpoints may offer users various height options. Users have the option to choose the most comfortable for them.</p>	June 2021	






Issue/Barrier Raised	Already addressed by GCworkplace or others?	OPI	Explanation	Status Date	Future Improvements
Tables in kitchens and common areas need to be strong enough and stable enough for someone to hold onto them for balance		PSPC GCworkplace Team	This is a great point.	June 2021	Following the research, add accessibility tips to the Technical Reference Manual.
Hard to move around with all that is needed for the day (laptop, supplies, etc.), too heavy, in the way with crutches / wheelchair, etc.		PSPC GCworkplace Team and possibly PSPC Accessible Procurement Group	While each department is responsible for purchasing something to help users bring their belongings to their workpoint, research needs to be done to find the best solutions.	December 2020	Following the research, add accessibility tips to the Technical Reference Manual (to be launched in April 2021)
Lights in hallways go off at a certain time, so it's dark when employees go to leave		Office of Accessibility in the Built Environment (OABE) – PSPC		June 2021	
Elevators with vocal/computer instead of buttons are hard to use (hard to hear in crowd, etc.)		Office of Accessibility in the Built Environment (OABE) – PSPC	OABE is looking at a variety of options for a more inclusive and pandemic resistant environment. One solution may not meet everyone's needs.	December 2020	More research, engagement and analysis to help ensure inclusivity.



Issue/Barrier Raised	Already addressed by GCworkplace or others?	OPI	Explanation	Status Date	Future Improvements
Elevator doors do not stay open long enough		Office of Accessibility in the Built Environment (OABE) – PSPC	The set time during which the elevator door remains open is set to 3 S minimum, however it can be increased if necessary. This increase can be based for a specific period of time.	March 2021	
Elevators can be challenging to find unless they have clearly visible signs		Office of Accessibility in the Built Environment (OABE) – PSPC	For the visually impaired, when the elevators arrive in a floor hall, an audible signal should sound once when in the up direction and twice in the down direction, the same similar signals in the car exist, the sound is tuned in a specific frequency range and be at least 10 dBA above the ambient sound level. For the hearing impaired, elevators should have visual panels, mounted to a specific height, and be visible from the floor adjacent to which the elevators are located. Now as an above and beyond requirement element, addition of sign mounted vertically to walls (blade sign) is recommended	June 2021	
Elevator buttons are not always accessible for		Office of Accessibility in the Built Environment	CSA B-44 identifies car buttons with the floor designation to be mounted 1200mm maximum above floor cab. As for the emergency or alarm call	June 2021	






Issue/Barrier Raised	Already addressed by GCworkplace or others?	OPI	Explanation	Status Date	Future Improvements
someone in a wheelchair		(OABE) – PSPC	buttons, they shall be grouped at the bottom of the control panel at a minimum height of 890 mm from the car floor.		
Ramp surface does not grip wheels		Office of Accessibility in the Built Environment (OABE) – PSPC	Based on CSA B651 2018, a ramp surface shall be stable, firm and slip resistant	May 2021	
Grade of ramps can be too steep		Office of Accessibility in the Built Environment (OABE) – PSPC	CSA B651 2018 requirements for ramps have taken wheelchairs and walkers into consideration. New buildings and restoration projects should meet the requirements.	May 2021	
Ramps are not well maintained in the winter		PSPC – National Service Call Centre and Property and Facility Management Service Line	This is a building maintenance issue	May 2021	Transfer consultation results to PSPC's National Service Call Centre and Property and Facility Management Service Line to see what changes can be done to improve the maintenance of access ramps.



Issue/Barrier Raised	Already addressed by GCworkplace or others?	OPI	Explanation	Status Date	Future Improvements
Ramps are not wide enough for someone to walk beside a person in a wheelchair		Office of Accessibility in the Built Environment (OABE) – PSPC	B651-18 identifies the minimum width of the ramps at 1000mm (distance measured between the handrails). However, some people in manual wheelchairs use their hands when climbing the ramp, a large width would deprive them of the use of the ramp. This is a balance of requirements so that all users can use the ramps. We understand that a person may need support while moving around the ramp. In general, a person supports it, positions itself behind the wheelchair, mainly in ascent.	June 2021	
No ramps available, only lifts to get upstairs or freight elevators		Office of Accessibility in the Built Environment (OABE) – PSPC	When the height to reach the entrance level would require a multitude of ramps with intermediate landings, the use of an elevator is often the best option. An elevator cancels out the necessary effort that must be required during the ascent. Note that slippage during movement in the ramps during winter periods is to be considered. Another option would be to designate a secondary door as the accessible route. In an existing building, it is possible that the entrance is at street level, but none of the floors is at this level, with the impossibility of adding a ramp. In	June 2021	



Issue/Barrier Raised	Already addressed by GCworkplace or others?	OPI	Explanation	Status Date	Future Improvements
			this case, a manual elevator is the only solution.		
Lifts and freight elevators require two people to operate so employees in wheelchairs have to wait for someone to help them		Office of Accessibility in the Built Environment (OABE) – PSPC	Please note that freight elevators are not part of the accessible route	June 2021	
Freight elevator doors are too heavy to be opened by employees with limited mobility		Office of Accessibility in the Built Environment (OABE) – PSPC	Please note that freight elevators are not part of the accessible route	June 2021	
Stairs have right-hand railings, but some employees need left-hand railings		Office of Accessibility in the Built Environment (OABE) – PSPC	Based on the current version of the National Building Code, as well as CSA B-651-18, circulation stairs need to have handrails on both sides. Please note that according to the Treasury Board Accessibility Standard for Real Property, enclosed exit stairwells are not part of the accessible route. For Federal Real property and leased spaces, procedures are in place for a	June 2021	



Issue/Barrier Raised	Already addressed by GCworkplace or others?	OPI	Explanation	Status Date	Future Improvements
			coordinated and safe evacuation for people with disabilities.		
There is no plan to help employees with mobility impairments evacuate in an emergency		Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC), Treasure Board Secretariat (TBS) and others	According to the Planning for Safety website of ESDC, a buddy system could be used. Under the buddy system, friends or associates volunteer to provide assistance to an individual who cannot evacuate independently. In the event of an alarm or emergency situation, the buddy and the person requiring assistance meet at a pre-arranged location. They then wait there for assistance, or at the closest area of refuge, or the buddy helps the other person to evacuate.	March 2021	