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Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund

Checklist: Providing Accessible Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare

This resource was developed by Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF) and Women Enabled International (WEI) as a tool for providers and clinic staff to evaluate the accessibility of their practices for people with disabilities. Our full report, **"Lessons from the Disability and Abortion Access Survey: Responses and Recommendations,"** provides further detailed recommendations.

To access the online version of this checklist including hyperlinks to helpful resources, use this QR code.



bit.ly/accessible-srh-checklist

Accessible Technology: Information Access, Websites, & Telehealth

- ☐ Ensure website, online intake forms, and telehealth platform comply with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.2 (WCAG 2.2).
- ☐ Ensure website and relevant resources are written in plain language (ideally 5th grade reading level or lower).
- ☐ Include information on website that is relevant to people with disabilities, such as how to request communication services and accommodations, rights to access services, and the accessibility of physical spaces or medical equipment.
- ☐ Ensure Telehealth platform can support:
 - Live integrated professional captioning (Communication Access Realtime Translation or "CART");
 - Automatically generated captions; and
 - Integration of additional people from additional locations, such as an ASL interpreter or a patient's supporter.



- ☐ Ask patients at the first point of contact if they have any access needs or need any accommodations to make services accessible to them.
 - Try: *"Do you have any access or communication needs that we should know about? Is there anything we can do that would make our services more accessible to you?"*
- ☐ Note patients' access needs and disabilities (if disclosed) in their electronic records so their documented needs follow them throughout their care experience.
- ☐ Have a formalized procedure in place for providing accommodations in a timely fashion.
- ☐ Train staff and providers in the clinic's legal responsibilities to provide accommodations, how to provide them in practice, and how to support disabled patients during an appointment.

Common Accommodations (Non-Exhaustive List)

- Budgeting additional time for an appointment to allow for physical transferring, engaging with interpreters, checking understanding, taking breaks, etc.
- Allowing a support person to be present at an appointment
- Using supported decision-making
- Performing a pelvic exam in an alternative position or providing additional modifications and supports during a pelvic exam
- Asking your doctor to wear a mask
- Moving items that block the path of travel for people who use mobility aids like wheelchairs, walkers or canes
- Reserving an appointment room that has accessible medical equipment
- Turning down the brightness of the exam room lights
- Providing a written outline of the information discussed during the appointment
- The possibilities are endless!



Effective Communication

- ☐ Ask patients at the first point of contact if they have any communication access needs and what forms of communication are most accessible to them.
 - Note patients' communication needs in their electronic records.
- ☐ Have forms available in multiple formats, including plain language, larger text, and braille. When possible, share forms in advance in an electronic format so patients may review them ahead of their appointment.
- ☐ Have interpretation (including ASL) and captioning contracts in place prior to receiving effective communication requests.
- ☐ Have a formalized procedure in place for providing auxiliary aids and services in a timely fashion, including but not limited to:
 - ASL Interpreters (in-person or through Video Remote Interpreting, "VRI"); some patients may need an interpreting team including a Deaf interpreter
 - Pocket talkers
 - Written materials in multiple accessible formats including plain language, Braille, and large print
 - Live captioning services
 - Assistive listening devices
- ☐ Train staff and providers in the clinic's legal responsibilities to facilitate effective communication and how to do so in practice.



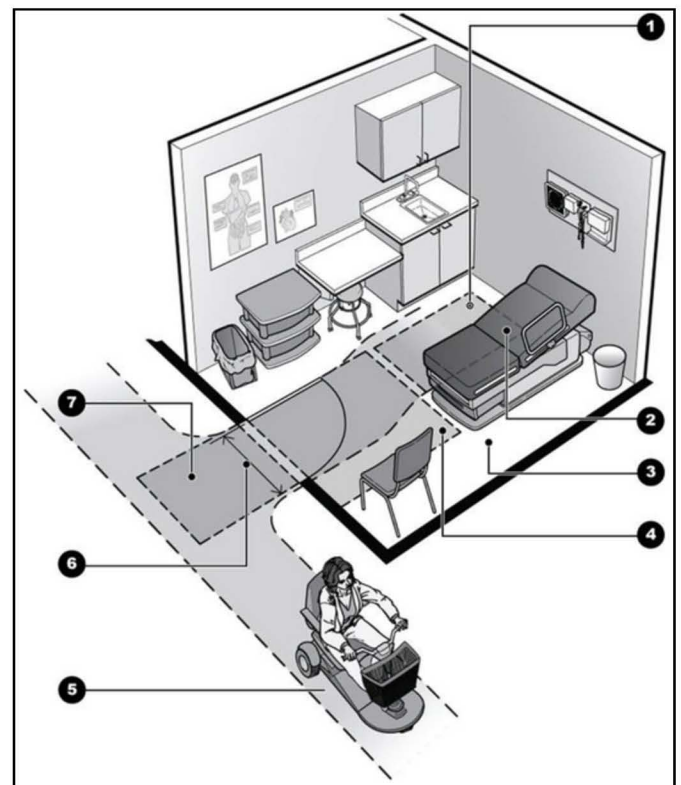
Physical Accessibility

Common Accessibility Features (Non-Exhaustive List)

- ☐ Facilities have features that make it possible for patients with mobility disabilities, including wheelchair users, to receive medical care. These features allow the patient to:
 - Enter the building and exam room;
 - Move around freely in the building and exam room; and
 - Use the accessible equipment provided.
- ☐ Facilities comply with the appropriate regulations and ADA Standards for Accessible Design depending on the build date and last renovated date

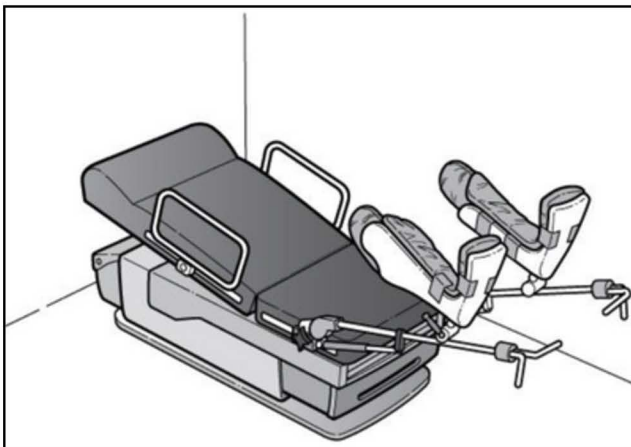
Accessible Exam Rooms

1. A clear floor space, 30" X 48" minimum, adjacent to the exam table & accessible route to allow for transfer.
2. Adjustable height accessible exam table lowers for transferring.
3. Space between table and wall allows staff to assist with patient transfers & positioning.
4. Amount of floor space needed beside and at end of exam table will vary depending on method of patient transfer.
5. Accessible route connects to other accessible common use spaces.
6. Accessible entry door has 32" minimum clear opening width with door open to 90 degrees.
7. Door to the room must allow for maneuvering clearances.

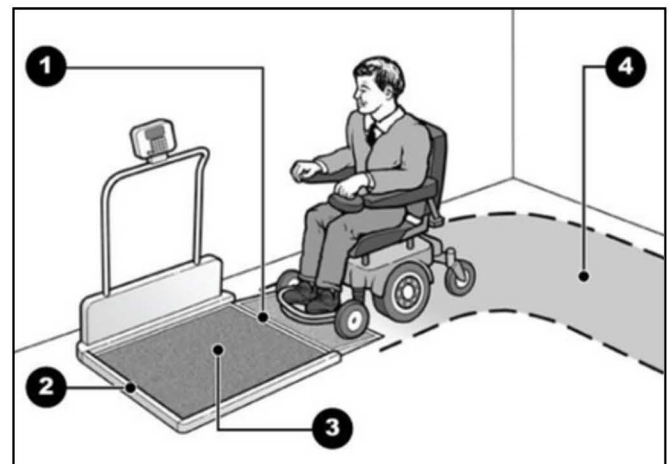


Accessible Medical Equipment

- ☐ Facility has accessible medical equipment, including:
 - **Accessible exam table:** adjustable height, adjustable grab bars, leg and foot supports instead of simple stirrups
 - **Accessible weight scale:** enables a wheelchair user to be weighed in their wheelchair
 - If applicable, accessible mammography, x-ray equipment
- ☐ All newly purchased or leased medical equipment acquired by a medical facility that receives federal funding must be accessible until the facility reaches a certain percentage of accessible equipment.
 - According to federal regulations, by July 8, 2026, every medical facility that receives federal funds must have at least one accessible exam table and one accessible scale.
- ☐ Staff and providers are trained on how to safely use accessible medical equipment, lifts, and how to move things out of the path of travel for wheelchair users.



Accessible Gynecological Exam Table



Accessible Weight Scale