

Halifax Infirmary Wayfinding Project Report September 2012

Background: 41 members of the public were recruited to visit the Halifax Infirmary building of the QEII Health Sciences Centre between June 4 and 10, 2012 and provide feedback on the effectiveness of directional signage at the Halifax Infirmary. The project focused primarily on clinics and services on the 3rd and 4th floors of the Halifax Infirmary, but also included other locations, such as Summer North and South elevators and the cafeteria. The responses from 33 participants (all that have been received to date) are compiled below.

It is worth noting that 11 of the 33 respondents participated as part of an English as a second language course, and are not yet proficient in English. Their feedback is valuable as we consider other patients, clients and visitors for whom English is a second language. What works well for those who speak and understand English fluently may not be helpful to those who do not.

Also of note: one participant was unable to visit her assigned destinations due to the fact that she had to come into the Halifax Infirmary for a real health emergency. She provided feedback based on her actual experience, which was with Cardiology.

Qualitative Feedback Themes

Subject	Feedback	Action	Costs
Finding the building	"I had already been to the site before. If I hadn't, or wasn't from Halifax, the sign on Robie Street that has 'QEII Health Sciences Centre, Capital Health Parking, Halifax Infirmary and Emergency' is a lot to take in. If in a rush, all I would have seen is QEII Health Sciences Centre." (Note: A tree blocks almost all sign content except QEII HSC)	Tree will be pruned to increase visibility of sign	Covered under existing landscaping budget as part of overall landscaping work
	More signage for drivers along Robie approaching from Quinpool or other.	Consider adding 1799 Robie St. to outside of parkade in large lettering. Cost out sign at Willow Tree intersection directing to Halifax Infirmary and VG.	<i>Civic address on parkade</i> 36"-48" high numbers "1799" Pin-mounted on North and South faces of parkade exterior. Qty: 2 Design services = \$350 Fabrication & installation = \$5,200 This includes letters, shipping, paint, pattern, bucket truck install. aluminum pin mount Civic Address letters (includes custom paint if needed) x 2 sets Total: \$5,550 + tax

			<p>Next steps: Explore less expensive options; weigh value vs. cost.</p> <p><i>Road signs</i> 3 directional signs 24" x 36" on posts to HRM standards Design services = \$450 Fabrication & installation = \$TBD Total: \$TBD</p>
Maps	Floor maps showing locations of specific clinics would be useful.	<p>Make maps of individual sites (VG and HI) available on website.</p> <p>Provide floor maps of 3rd and 4th Robie to information desk staff to pass out to patients.</p>	<p>- No cost</p> <p>- Minimal cost</p>
	On Capital Health website, place map and floor plans on dedicated tab called "Directions" under patients and visitors tab, called Directions.	Add all available floor maps to website.	No cost
	"Perhaps have two maps, one for the VG, one for the Infirmary, with Public Gardens as a landmark on both"	Have AV design separate VG and HI maps and make these available on website in addition to QEII building-finder map.	No cost
	Phone app-based maps would be great.	Explore possibility of phone-based app	<p>iPhone app, interior mapping, per facility \$50 - 75k (rough estimate) Not financially feasible at this time. Explore potential partnership with NSCC cartography program?</p>
Information kiosk (immediately inside Robie St. entrance)	The information kiosk map was slightly confusing in that the floor labels are positioned above and to the left of the floor plan, but someone could erroneously read the floor label positioned to the bottom left (which would be for the next floor down).	Make clearer visual dividers when indicating floors on directories.	<p><i>Directory Kiosk / Elevator directories / Floor map updates</i> Design services = \$750 Print kiosk maps/directory/floorplan inserts = \$1,000 Installation: - Facility directory x 3 = \$ 210. - Kiosk maps x 3 = \$300 - Floor directories x 3 = \$300: - Elevator directories x 11 = \$ 550 Total: \$3,110 + tax</p>
	Label information kiosk "directory" rather than "4 th Floor" so that people know it contains information about services on all floors, not just the fourth floor.	Re-label information kiosk "Directory"	<p><i>Directory kiosk header</i> Re-letter kiosk header "Directory" Qty: 3 Design services = \$75 Fabrication & installation = \$300</p>

			Total: \$375 + tax
	- Suggestion that we adopt a digital signage system similar to malls	<p>- A dynamic digital signage system would be a useful solution for users and would allow us greater flexibility in terms of options (languages, searching by doctor, etc.) It is a costly solution and would also require an area to take responsibility for keeping updated. When the VG is replaced, we recommend digital signage be installed in the new facility.</p> <p>To our knowledge, no single department has the budget to take on the cost of implementing digital signage at the HI. If it were determined to be a priority, a cost-sharing arrangement between departments might be the most viable option. It is unlikely that we will be able to put this in place in the near future.</p>	<p><i>Digital wayfinding system</i> digital displays, programming, installation per facility - \$200 - 300k (rough estimate) Not financially feasible at this time.</p>
Directories	"Regarding the directory on the 8 th floor between the elevators, I'm baffled by the many shapes and colours. Are they for my reference? If so, include a key."	These directories are part of an old signage system. We will look at what's there and determine what changes are possible.	- TBD
Robie St. lobby	Several participants commented that the lobby and registration check-in area was cluttered and had too many signs, contributing to confusion: "Too many signs in Robie Lobby. Cut down on visual clutter."	- Determine what signage is absolutely necessary in this area and remove any additional signage. Ensure that all important messages are captured on official signage, eliminating the need for paper signs. Facilities will remove patterned wallpaper from back wall and paint wall a solid colour. Will also hide electrical wires with baseboard cover.	- Minimal cost
Registration kiosks	Area cluttered, confusing, too many signs, seems to contribute to congestion	Liam Shannon, process engineer, and Margaret Angus have looked at area and come up with recommendations for changing layout slightly to make registration process more intuitive. Margaret will work with Dragan Samardzic, designer to develop one sign that is on brand that contains the necessary information.	- Minimal cost
	If patients enter via Summer Street, there are no directions as to how to find kiosks on 4 th floor (this feedback came from an actual patient, not a project participant)	Add elevator button decal Indicating "Registration Level 4 Robie St."	Elevator button decal Indicating "Registration Level 4 Robie St." 3" x 3" self-adhesive CMYK decal, Qty: 4

			Design services = \$150 Fabrication & installation = \$150 Total \$300 + tax
Robie St. Elevators	Several participants expressed confusion/frustration about the fact that the Robie St. elevator does not go to all floors.	Change elevator signage to indicate ONLY the floors to which these elevators go (3, 4, 5)	Cost of elevator directories (\$550) has already been captured above under Information Kiosk category - <i>Directory Kiosk / Elevator directories / Floor map updates</i>
	Put "Robie Street" next to "4" on elevator so people do not go to 1 st floor.	Put "Robie Street" next to "4" on elevators.	Cost of elevator button decal already captured above under "Registration kiosks"
	Add "Street" to references to "Summer Elevators" to be consistent with "Robie Street" elevators and to reduce confusion for those who may not realize Summer refers to street	Add "Street" to "Summer Elevators" references	<i>Vinyl changes</i> (add "St. to all "Summer elevators" sign messages, "Registration" + arrows to selected signs, add, delete and re-order vinyl lettering on selected signs as per review Aug. 2) Design services = \$250 Fabrication & installation = \$750 Total: \$1,000 + tax
Floor wayfinding	If making use of directional floor decals, they need to be replaced	The worn floor decals between the Veterans' Memorial Building and the Halifax Infirmary will be removed. We will then assess the best means of directing people between these buildings, whether it be floor decals or wall signs.	- Minimal cost
Stairs	Little to no signage to indicate stairs	Add signs to indicate stair locations – series of flagmounted signs as well as wall signs	<i>Stairs ID flag mounts / directional signs</i> Program which signs need new vinyl and assess impacts to other messaging (location plan needed) Add new "Stairs" directional messages to existing signs Design services = \$350 Fabrication & installation: - F/M Stair signs x4 = \$300 - C/M Stair signs x4 = \$250 Total: \$900 + tax
Colour contrast	Several participants commented that the white text on grey background did not offer enough contrast.	Make background darker for removable inserts in information kiosks and elevators.	Changing the background colour of permanent signage would require all signs across the district to be changed. Devise new sign and colour standards,

			<p>system wide \$500 - 750k. Not financially feasible.</p> <p>Note: White on gray standard does conform to the 80% contrast standard used by the American Disabilities Association for accessible information.</p>
Language	Lack of bilingual signage noted.	French information kiosk, which had been moved to storage, will be returned to Robie St. lobby beside English kiosk.	- No cost
	Participants who did not speak or read English were challenged to find their way around.	<p>One of the most effective options for providing direction in multiple languages would be dynamic digital signage. This would require a significant investment of money, and would require an area to oversee and ensure content is kept up-to-date. Due to cost, it is unlikely we will be able to put this technology in place at the HI in the near future.</p> <p>We recommend implementing this technology when the new hospital is built to replace the VG.</p>	<p>- <i>Digital wayfinding system</i> digital displays, programming, installation per facility - \$200 - 300k (estimate)</p> <p>Not financially feasible at this time for the Halifax Infirmary. Recommend digital signage be implemented when the new hospital is built to replace the VG.</p>
Visual wayfinding	Several participants were students in an English as a Second Language program, so were unable to read and understand most signage. This group suggested having a wayfinding system that incorporates images. "For example, have a 'key' of pictures and medical locations (ultrasound, blood collection, etc.) so newcomers can point and be referred to the correct location."	<p>Identify opportunities for visual wayfinding when new facility is built.</p> <p>Explore opportunities for visual wayfinding even within our existing signage systems.</p>	- Need to explore further
Positioning of signs (and positioning of items on signs)	- View of signs located behind registration kiosks is blocked.	- Signage added to bulkheads above registration area.	<p><i>Registration area directional signs</i> Add lettering to bulkhead (same as directional info on back wall signs) Design services = \$150 Fabrication & installation = \$400 Total: \$550 + tax</p>
	- Sign on corner of main corridor from Robie St. lobby to Summer St. elevators should list elevators at the top since these are most requested location	- Change order of sign items to place Summer St. elevators at top of sign for greatest prominence	Cost of changes covered under "Vinyl changes" captured in third item under "Robie St. elevators"
	The following suggestions relate to an	The following changes pertain to an old	TBD








	<p>old signage system that is still in place on inpatient units:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Good placement of ‘8.4’ off elevators on 8th floor, but angle the arrow so I don’t walk right to the end of the hall.” Need to know to turn right. - Washroom on 8.4 – if washroom door were closed, I might have missed sign. - On 8th floor on sign immediately in front of elevator, suggest putting all information for one area on one line 	<p>signage system – we will look at what’s there and determine what changes are possible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Change angle of 8.4 arrow - Put additional washroom sign to the left of the big doors at 8.4 - Put all info for one area on one line (8th floor) 	
Specific clinics			
EEG Clinic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some people had difficulty finding the EEG clinic – felt like they might be on the wrong track going down a long hallway with signs indicating other services, but not EEG. - “I found it anxiety-inducing to spend more time in gurney-filled hospital corridors than necessary - definitely the sense that one isn’t supposed to be there, especially on the weekend. Perhaps someone sent to EEG should be sent to another entrance from which the clinic is more easily accessed?” 	Put additional signage for EEG along corridor.	<p>EEG clinic directional messages Assess need and reprogram signs for vinyl additions. Design services = \$75 Fabrication & installation = \$150 Total: \$225 + tax</p>
Orthopaedics/Orthopaedic Assessment Clinic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “I went to the assessment clinic instead of orthopaedics not knowing what the difference was between the two.” 	<p>When sending patients to the Orthopaedic Assessment Clinic, ensure they are given a room number (4426). This number will be reflected on signage as well.</p> <p>Confusion over Orthopaedic Clinic vs. Orthopaedic Assessment Clinic is larger than signage and will need to be considered more broadly.</p>	
Pulmonary Lab	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Signs led me to the Pulmonary lab, but there was no signage at the lab itself to indicate that I had arrived at my destination.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Install sign on door of Pulmonary Lab 	<p><i>Department ID</i> <i>Pulmonary Lab</i> Level 3, on glass in door This was ordered, but not done in last round, so needs to be completed. Fabrication & installation = No charge</p>

	- It is worth noting that pulmonary patients (who have breathing challenges) have a significant walk from registration on the 4 th floor to the Pulmonary Lab on the 3 rd floor.	This challenge is not one that can be solved with signage. However, this feedback is being considered as part of a larger discussion.	
Plastics	Problem finding the waiting room for Plastics Clinic. Signs angled so they were not visible from corridor.	Resolved with new general waiting area.	
General	You should do this research with the other Capital Health facilities in Halifax. The Victoria General is really hard to get around.	Once we have completed actions coming out of the Halifax Infirmary wayfinding project, we will undertake a similar process at the VG.	TBD

Quantitative Feedback






Recruitment



















Participants heard about the project through a variety of channels, noted below:

		Response Total	Response Percent
Radio		2	6%
Facebook		2	6%
Twitter		3	9%
Capital Health website		3	6%
Capital Health employee		4	12%
Friend/Acquaintance		2	6%
Other		17	53%
Total Respondents		33	

Locations





Each participant was assigned two destinations. The range of destinations visited is reflected below:

		Response Total	Response Percent
ATM (bank machine)		11	34%
Blood Collection		4	12%
Cafeteria		11	34%
Cardiology		2	6%
Diagnostic Imaging (X-Ray)		9	28%




EEG/EMG		3	9%
Elevators (Summer North)		3	9%
Elevators (Summer South)		11	34%
Emergency Department		3	9%
Inpatient Unit 8.4		1	
Neurology		1	3%
Neurosurgery		1	3%
Orthopaedics		2	6%
Orthopaedic Assessment Clinic		1	3%
Plastic Surgery		1	3%
Pulmonary Lab		2	6%
Respirology		2	6%
Same Day Surgery		2	6%
Tim Hortons		4	12%
Urology		2	6%
Vascular Lab/Vascular Surgery		1	3%
Vending machine		7	22%
Washrooms		15	47%
Total Respondents		33	

Finding the building

Participants describe their overall experience in finding the Halifax Infirmery Building as being:

		Response Total	Response Percent
Excellent		16	47%
Very good		6	19%
Good		10	31%
Neutral		0	0%
Fair		1	3%
Poor		0	0%
Total Respondents		33	100%

Each participant was sent a copy of the [QEII Building Finder map](#) with the Halifax Infirmery location highlighted. Participants found the map:

		Response Total	Response Percent
Very Useful		10	28%
Useful		11	34%
Neutral		12	38%



Useless		0	0%
Total Respondents		33	100%

Please note: Those who responded “neutral” to the question above did not speak English as a first language. Further suggestions to improve wayfinding for people who do not read or speak English fluently are noted later in the report.





Finding the clinic or destination

Inside the Robie St. doors of the Halifax Infirmary is a stationary information kiosk with maps and a directory. In the feedback survey, we asked participants to identify whether they used the information kiosk, and if so, if they found it useful.






Response to the question: “Did you use the information kiosk (with maps and directory) located just inside the Robie St. entrance of the Halifax Infirmary to help you find your destination?”

		Response Total	Response Percent
Yes		27	81%
No		6	19%
Total Respondents		33	

Participants were asked: “If you used the information kiosk (with maps and directory), please rate its usefulness. If you did not use this tool, just leave this question blank.”






		Response Total	Response Percent
Very useful		8	27%
Useful		6	23%
Neutral		12	46%
Useless		1	4%
Total Respondents		26	100%
(skipped this question)			6

Response to: “I found the signs and directions in the Halifax Infirmary clear and easy to understand.”

		Response Total	Response Percent
Strongly Agree		6	19%
Agree		14	45%
Neutral		9	26%
Disagree		1	3%
Strongly Disagree		2	6%

Total Respondents	31	100%
(skipped this question)		1

Response to: The location of signs and directions in the Halifax Infirmary building was:

		Response Total	Response Percent
Excellent		7	23%
Good		19	58%
Neutral		3	10%
Fair		1	3%
Poor		2	6%
Total Respondents		32	100%
(skipped this question)			1