

**Annual Report  
2002 - 2003**

University of Toronto  
St. George Campus

**Accessibility Services (AS)  
Programs & Services for Students With A Disability**

**Prepared by: Janice Martin, MSW  
Manager, Accessibility Services**

**Accessibility Services**  
Programs & Services for Students with a Disability  
130 St. George Street, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Toronto, ON M5S 3H1

Telephone: 416-978-8060

TDD: 416-978-1902

Fax: 416-978-8246

Email: [disability.services@utoronto.ca](mailto:disability.services@utoronto.ca)

Web Site: <http://disability.sa.utoronto.ca>

## **Executive Summary**

May 02 to April 03

Accessibility Services (AS), St. George Campus, facilitates success for students with a disability in the University setting by providing support, advice and academic accommodations. AS also provides advice and information to applicants, makes referrals, and advises faculty and staff on issues pertaining to barrier-free access and support for students with disabilities. Reporting to the Office of Student Affairs, and as a member of the E.I.A.G., the Service advocates for the basic rights and responsibilities set out in the Ontario Human Rights Code and University's Statement of Institutional Purpose. The Service receives funding from the Ontario Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities and supplementary funding from University of Toronto.

Students provide medical documentation for a wide variety of disabilities including chronic health, mobility/functional, hearing impairment, vision impairment, communication, mental health, learning disabilities, head injuries, environmental sensitivities, as well as temporary disabilities. Some of the services offered are: academic accommodation advice; assessments (for learning disabilities, adaptive technology, etc.); alternate test/exam centre; adaptive technology and assistive devices; funding assistance, volunteer and computerized note taking; sign-language interpreting; accessible transportation on campus; and advice on barrier-free accessibility.

Registered students with the Service from April '02 to May '03 increased 27%, from approximately 800 students to over 1000 students. These numbers are expected to increase again due to the pending double cohort. The Service staff consists of approximately 10 full and part-time appointed and 40+ contract/casual part-time staff who provide individualized, custom made services for students.

Several changes to the Service were made in an effort to address the increase in student registration in order to be student centered and responsive to student needs. Additional funding was acquired from The Learning Opportunity Task Force to hire both a Learning Strategist and Adaptive Technologist to help students with learning disabilities. The Test/Exam Centre moved to the barrier-free accessible first floor of the Robarts Library. St. George Accessibility Services played a key role in promoting a more inclusive University community, submitting comprehensive Positions Papers in response to the Provost's Green Paper and the Provost's House Task Force. The Office was instrumental in attaining a National award for the University from the Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled People for its on-going efforts to make all three campuses barrier-free and accessible. Students had access to Disability Advisors on both an appointment and drop-in basis. Partnerships with faculties, colleges and services were strengthened across campus and in the community.

The 2003-04 year will see the office play a key role on the UofT Ontarians with Disability Act Planning Committee, suggesting best practices to promote a more inclusive and barrier-free environment across the UofT community. Further, the office will prepare a case for funding for additional staff and space.

**University of Toronto St. George Campus  
Accessibility Services (AS)**

**Annual Report**

**2002-2003 Highlights**

- **27% increase in students; over 1000 students registered with Service**
- **Disability Issues Position Papers submitted in response to the Provost's Green Paper and Provost's Housing Task Force**
- **UofT wins access award from the Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons**
- **Test/Exam Centre constructed and re-located to the Robarts Library**
- **Funding acquired from the Learning Opportunities Task Force to hire 2 additional staff to enhance services for students with a learning disability**
- **Captioned videos about Service continues to successfully "tell our story" to the University community**
- **Partnership development with faculties, colleges and services across campus**

**Summary:**

In 2002-2003 (May 1<sup>st</sup> to April 30<sup>th</sup>), St. George Campus Accessibility Services experienced an overall 27% increase in the number of eligible students who registered with the Department, increasing from 800 to over 1000 students. We continued to build and improve upon our department's infrastructure and fine-tuning of the organizational structure, policy framework, database and web-site.

The office played a key role in promoting a more inclusive University community. Comprehensive positions papers were submitted to the Provost's Green Paper and the Provost's House Task Force. Both these position papers can be found on the Service's web-site. The office was instrumental in attaining a National award for the University from the Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled People for its on-going efforts to make all three campuses barrier-free and accessible for students with disabilities. The Office will also play an active role in the development of a UofT Accessibility Plan in response to the requirements of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA) 2001.

Policies to reflect best practices were developed and implemented in following areas:

1) Administration Unit; 2) Learning Disability Unit; 3) Health Unit; 4) Test/Exam Unit; and 5) Volunteer Note Taking Unit. Accessibility Services continued to create partnerships across campus with various faculties, departments, and services as well as in the broader community.

#### **Accessibility Service Offices:**

- **Test/Exam Centre constructed and moved to Robarts Library**
- **Partnership with OISE/UT provides extra private rooms for test/exams**
- **OISE/UT partnership provides office for Learning Strategist**

The Service's Test/Exam Centre was moved to their newly built space in the barrier-free accessible 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the Robarts Library in the summer of 2002. Built on a semi-circular design to enable the invigilators to view the private rooms and carrels, construction also included an accessible washroom and lockers for students. This Centre is located in the hub of the University's student activities. With the Service's Administration offices across the floor from the newly built Test/Exam Office, and with the Adaptive Technology Resource Centre next door, students were ensured a more seamless and integrated service.

With increased demand for more private test/exam rooms, the partnership with OISE/UT continues to provide an additional 50 private carrels with windows on the doors for overflow of students at exam times. Students continue to support this arrangement. Further, negotiations with OISE/UT resulted in an office for the LD Learning Strategist.

#### **Service Delivery:**

- **27% increase in student registrations increase Advisor/Counsellor caseloads**
- **Service received funding to hire 2 FTE staff for students with Learning Disabilities**

The 2002-2003 year supported over 1000 students registered with the Service. It is important to note that this statistic does not reflect the students who applied and met with Advisor/Counsellors but were not registered with the department. (Referrals were made to other services due the fact that these students did not meet the criteria for our Service.) Further, it does not reflect the students who graduated from UofT to return for supporting letters and documentation for applications to other Universities. It does not reflect the inquiries from prospective students and parents who were considering attending the University of Toronto.

The Department has the following areas with their own distinct responsibilities, namely:

The Health Unit (students with mobility/functional, chronic health, mental health, hearing impairment, vision impairment, head injuries, communication and temporary disabilities)

The Learning Disability Unit

The Test/Exam Centre Office

The Volunteer Note Taking Program

The Administration Unit

AS employs approximately 10 appointed staff and 40+ contract/casual staff who work full and part time. The 10 AS appointed staff include:

3.40 FTE staff in the Administration Unit (including Manager, front reception, financial administration)

2 FTE Advisors/Counsellors in the Health Unit

1.1 FTE Advisor/Counsellors in the Learning Disability Unit

2.0 FTE LD Strategist and Adaptive Technologist

1FTE in the Test/Exam Service

1FTE Mobility Van Driver (sessional September to May)

In addition, the Service hires the services of a host of 40+ part-time contract/casual staff:

- 1) Psychometrists to assess students with Learning Disabilities
- 2) Occupational Therapist to assess Adaptive Equipment/Technology requirements
- 3) Scribes to write test/exams for students
- 4) Invigilators to oversee test/exams
- 5) Couriers to obtain tests from faculty
- 6) Sign language interpreters for students who are deaf
- 7) Computerized note takers for students who are hard of hearing
- 8) Student assistants: test registration office; note taking service; reception desk

Spread Sheets were created to track staff and salaries in each of these areas.

Further, the Advisors/Counsellors advertise positions or find referrals in order to facilitate services for students; in addition, Advisors arrange for funding for students from the Bursary for Students with a Disability (BSWD) or the UofT Alternate Bursary for services such as:

- 1) Orientation and mobility assistants and readers for students who are low vision
- 2) Assistant care givers for students who have chronic pain
- 3) Tutors for students
- 4) Adaptive technology and assistive devices
- 5) Assessments and coaching from health care professionals
- 6) Books on tape

To address the increase in student numbers, efforts were made to streamline the service delivery model, particularly within the Health Unit. The funding proposal submitted to the Learning Opportunities Task Force to hire a Learning Strategist (LS) and an Adaptive Technologist (AT) for St. George Campus was approved. St. George hired the two full-time staff. The LS position was an external hire while the AT position was contracted from the ATRC.

### **The Health Unit:**

- **Unit registered 555 students; an increase of 39%**
- **Students with multiple disabilities dramatically increased**
- **handbook developed for students with temporary disabilities**

The two Advisors/Counsellors in the Health Unit experienced a dramatic increase in registration of students with mobility/functional, sensory, environmental, chronic health, mental health, head injury and temporary disabilities. 555 students registered with the Unit in 2002-2003 compared with 398 in 2001-2002, which reflects a 39% increase. Further, the number of students with multiple disabilities rose dramatically.

The Drop-In Service introduced last year (twice each week by both staff members) was very popular and well used by students. Collaboration and advocacy for students within the University continued to be an important aspect of the work with and for students.

To provide as efficient and effective service as possible, a number of policies were refined within the Unit and in the Student Handbook. Protocols and a Handbook for Students with Temporary Disabilities were developed. Collaboration with the Coordinator for Crisis Response Programs resulted in the availability of a Peer Support Program for students.

This Unit spearheaded a number of new policy initiatives to increase efficiency and improve the level of service particularly with regards to student registration. Forms for required documentation for each disability group (other than Learning Disabilities) were developed for students to take to their health care professional for medical documentation. In order to maximize staff time, documentation and completion of information packages are required prior to appointments with Advisors/Counsellors.

### **The Learning Disability (LD) Unit:**

- **LD Unit registered 471 students; in increase of 25%**
- **Funding acquired for LD Learning Strategist and Adaptive Technologist; 137 students receive enhanced services and attend workshops**

- **94 LD assessments completed**
- **2 student social skills groups initiated, one in partnership with the Faculty of Medicine**
- **New partnerships with the Faculties result in solving student issues**
- **Workshop provided for OISE/UT Counselling and Psycho Educational Clinic**

The LD Unit provides a full service delivery model for students with: 1) LD intake appointments with LD Specialists; 2) LD psycho educational assessments for students who suspect they have a learning disability or require an updated LD report; 3) referrals to the Learning Strategist to work on deficit areas while utilizing areas of strength; 4) referrals to Adaptive the Technology Resource Centre for an AT assessment and recommendations; 5) referral to the Adaptive Technologist for LD technology and software training; and 6) on-going advice and follow-up with LD Specialists. This full circle in-house delivery model provides students with an integrated and seamless service.

Four part-time staff, including a Registered Psychologist, provided 94 LD assessments. The assessments are conducted over a 7 to 9 hour testing time period resulting in a written report with findings and recommendations applicable to post secondary education.

Three part-time Advisor/Counsellors (equivalent to 1.3 FTE) provided advice, accommodations, funding support, etc. for students. The Advisor/Counsellors worked closely with the Learning Strategist, the Adaptive Technologist and the Psychometrists to ensure that students were receiving the necessary support they require for success at University. As well, the Advisors provided workshops and gave information sessions to University Faculty and Staff. Further, the Learning Strategist and Adaptive Technologist met with 137 students over the academic year to provide enhanced services as well as a series of workshops for learning strategies and study skills.

#### **Test and Exam Centre:**

- **3,935 tests/exams administered for 523 students – 100 additional students compared to 2001-2002 stats; number of test/exams written increased**
- **partnership with OISE/UT continues to provide space to write tests/exams**
- **students required to submit list of courses from UofT ROSI to ensure accurate information is entered into the database**

The 2002-03 fiscal year witnessed yet another marked increase in test/exam service, particularly in regards to the number of students. There were 523 students who used the Service, 100 more compared to those who used the Service the previous year.

There were 2412 tests (compared to 1989 tests in '01-'02) and 1523 exams (compared to 1860 exams in '01-'02) for a total of 3935 test/exams written in the test/exam centre.

The partnership with OISE/UT continued to provide a second location for student overflow during exam time. Approximately 50 private carrels with windows on the Doors were provided for students.

### **Volunteer Note-taking Services:**

- **Professors and instructors provide e-mail notes for students**
- **Additional 150 courses require note taking service**

The volunteer note taking service continues to be a challenge. There are 2 summer sessions as well as fall and winter sessions, all of which have a variety of half year and full year courses (see attached chart). When students register, they are given policies and procedures that state the service is dependent on volunteers. If volunteers are not forthcoming and notes do not materialize, students are asked to book an appointment with their Advisor/Counsellor to discuss options.

We are pleased to report that professors and instructors have begun to respond to the request to provide notes and information on web sites or e-mail notes to the Service. Some students recruit their own volunteer note-taker in class; some lecturers hand out information to students in class.

#### **Volunteer Note-taking Statistics:**

233 students requested note taking in 610 courses

347 out of the 610 (57%) courses were filled with volunteer note takers

The 2002-2003 statistics reflect an increase of approximately 150 additional note taking course requests.

### **Van Service:**

- **Van rides almost double in number**

Our wheelchair accessible van on St. George Campus provided 2026 rides (increased from 1076 rides in 2001–2002) for approximately 8 months from September to May for approximately 28 students with mobility or chronic health disabilities.

### **UofT Adaptive Technology Resource Centre (ATRC):**

- **100 students assessed for adaptive technology**



Accessibility Services contracts the services of the ATRC to provide adaptive technology assessments by their Occupational Therapist. In the past year, approximately 100 students were referred for consultation to determine what technology would best suit their needs. Additional students returned with questions regarding advances in technologies that could assist with their studies, or for further training on technology acquired in previous years. Students make inquiries and try out adaptive technologies during daily drop-in hours.

A workshop series was offered to students to train on adaptive technology to assist with their studies. These included basic Ergonomics, Voice Recognition, Organizational, Screen Reading and Screen Magnification software programs. As well, the Centre offered consultations to Colleges and Faculties regarding installation of adaptive technology in computer labs.

#### **Transitional Year Programme (TYP):**

- **44% of TYP students (27/62 graduates) registered with Service**
- **Information session held with TYP faculty and staff**
- **Two year option for students with disabilities**
- **Service's Learning Strategist provides workshop and drop-in sessions for students**

Accessibility Services and the TYP continue to work together to assist eligible students with their accommodations in order to facilitate a successful TYP experience and entrance into University.

#### **Finances & Reporting Structure:**

- **UofT Audit Department audits Accessibility Services**
- **Continued partnership with Admissions and Awards to support student not eligible for the Disability Bursary**

AS was audited and was given an overall pleasing report card, save a few minor adjustments to record keeping. The Service continued to streamline the financial reporting and work closely with the Admissions and Awards Office for cheque reimbursements for students.

#### **Disability Endowment Fund:**

- **Feature article in UofT publication "Campaign Quarterly"**

The Campaign project endowment fund assists students who are not eligible for the Bursary for Students with a Disability (BSWD) or a University Bursary. Feature articles on students with a disability in the UofT publication, the “Campaign Quarterly”, encouraged donations to this fund.

### **Outreach to Students:**

- **Partnership with Registrar offices**
- **7000 brochures distributed to new and returning students**
- **Information Workshops offered to new and returning students**
- **Web-site offers update to programs and services**

The web site continues to be a major source of information for students and staff. Information includes required documentation, accommodations by disability, test and exam policy and procedures, barrier-free educational initiatives and map of the campus, resources for students and staff, financial aid, related services and resources throughout the campus and community.

The Service distributed 7,000 brochures to new and returning students via the College Registrars to encourage eligible students to register with the department in a timely fashion. An Information Workshop was held for incoming students in late summer. The workshop gave new students and their families an opportunity to learn about Accessibility Services and the University resources and supports.

### **Outreach to the University Community:**

- **Presentations and partnerships with campus Faculties, Departments and Services**
- **Videos about the Service continue to serve well as a public relations piece**

Aimed at providing information to incoming students with disabilities, the videos feature students with disabilities in a variety of locations across the campus who talk about accommodations for their disabilities as well as their personal experiences. Diverse and inclusive of people with disabilities and cultural backgrounds, they are useful tools to inform staff about the work of the Service both within the University community and externally.

Service staff gave presentations and collaborated with UofT faculties, departments, and services. Further, Staff provided information on disability issues and encouraged

partnerships across campus. Some of these included: Psychiatric Services, Health Services, Counselling and Learning Skills, Housing Services, Family Care Office, Human Resources, Don Training, Registrar Offices; Faculty Engineering, Faculty of Physical Education, Faculty of Social Work; Faculty of Law, Faculty of Medicine, OISE/UT; Transitional Year Program, Status of Women Office; Admissions and Awards Office, and the Office of Teaching Assistants. Outreach to the University Community continued to grow and expand because the Service became more responsive to the University Community.

The Service's Manager is a member of the University's Equity Issues Advisory Group that meets quarterly with the President of the University to advise and update him on various issues related to respective equity areas, and is a member of the UofT Ontarians with Disability Act (ODA) Committee.

### **Outreach Beyond the University Community**

#### **Accessibility Services Manager:**

- elected Vice Chair of the Inter-University Disability Issues Association (IDIA)
- Member of the City of Toronto Disability Advisory Committee
- Board member of the Terry Fox Hall of Fame.
- Board member of the CFPDP Wheelchair Road Race
- Board member, V.P. Finance & Administration, Ontario Sports for the Disabled
- Professional Association Memberships: CACUSS; AHEAD

#### **Staff Professional Development:**

- Professional staff attended various disability related conferences and UofT Professional Development Seminars to address specific professional development needs (e.g. AHEAD; Neuroimaging of Cognitive Functioning, workshops by the Ontario Psychological Association, International Dyslexia and other Learning Disability conferences, etc.)
- Support staff attended UofT Human Resource workshops and seminars related to their roles in the Department (e.g. Dealing with Difficult Behaviour, Making Referrals within the University, Business Administration, etc.).

#### **Barrier-Free Accessibility Initiatives on Campus:**

- **UofT presented with national award from the Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons**

The Office was instrumental in attaining a National award for the University from the Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled People for its on-going efforts to make all three campuses barrier-free and accessible for students with disabilities.

The Manager continues to be active as a member of the Student Administrative Council Wheelchair Access Committee (SACWAC) to help delegate funds for barrier free initiatives as well as act as a resource, advisor and facilitator on barrier-free access issues on campus.

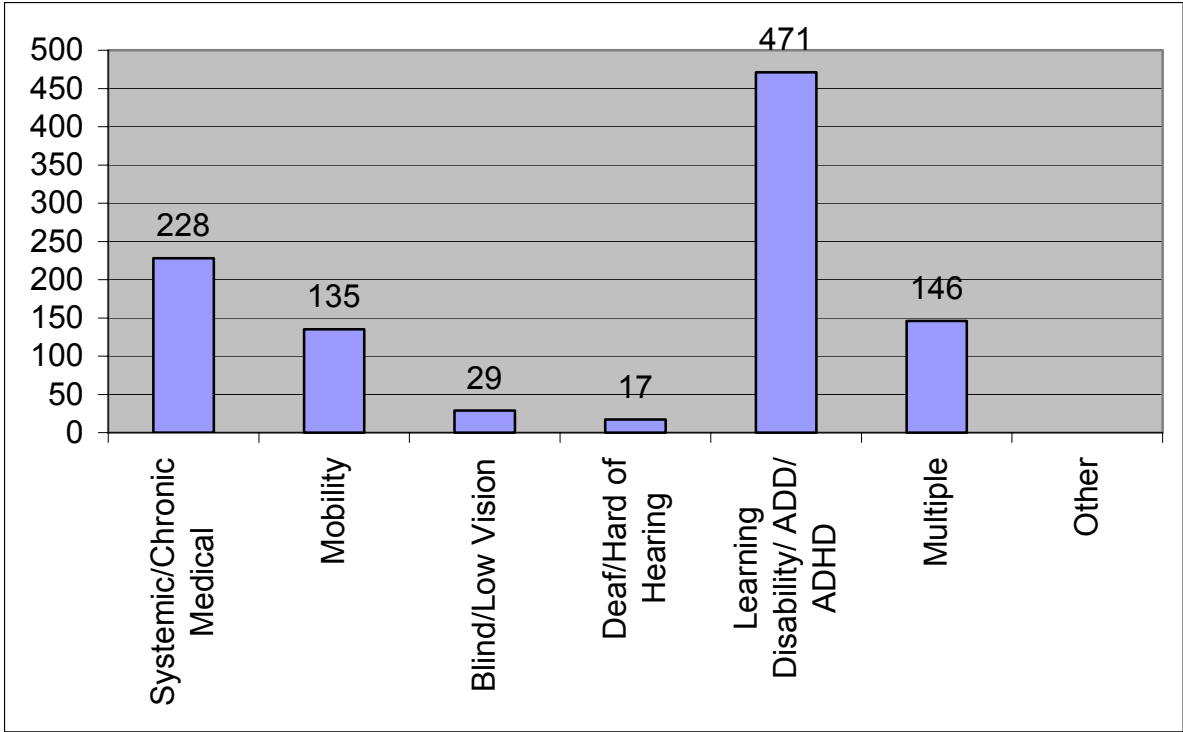
With the University's proposed \$500 million building campaign over the next few years, the office acts as an advocate for revisions to the UofT barrier-free standard checklist for new and renovated buildings to ensure inclusivity and accessibility for all students with disabilities.

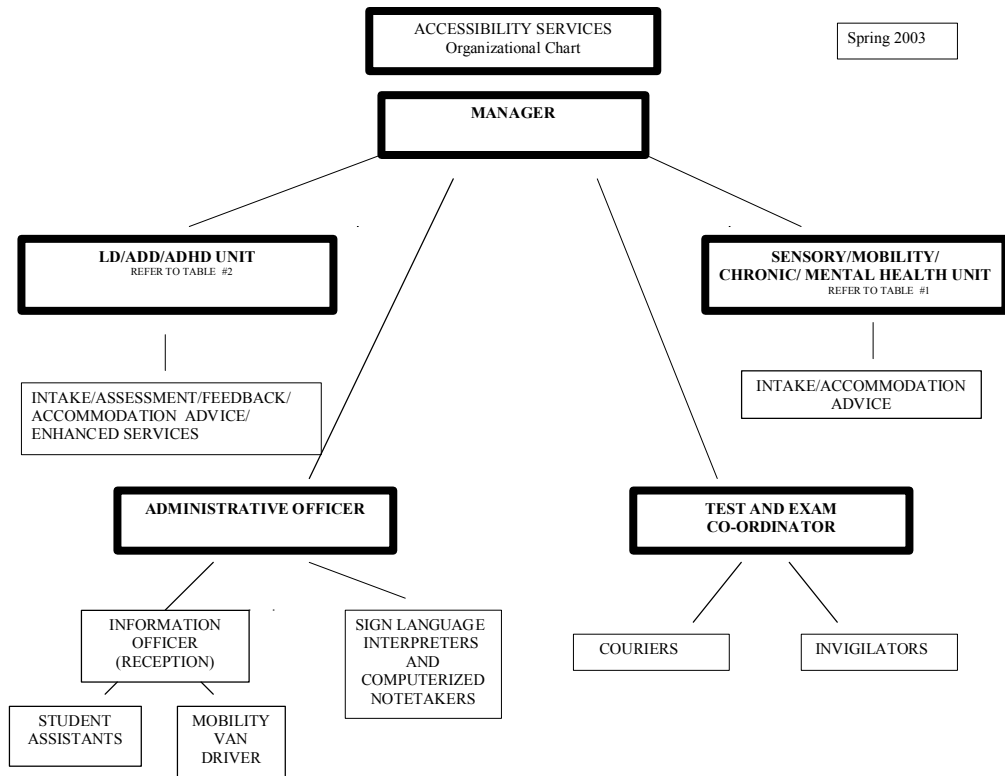
**Summary:**

With the 27% increase in students registered with the Service and the anticipated increase with the pending double cohort, Accessibility Services is committed to improving services for students in partnership with the University community. The comprehensive response to the Provost's White Paper on Academic Planning and The Provost's Housing Task Force, the re-location of the Test/Exam Centre, the streamlining of policies and procedures, outreach to the University community, advocacy work on barrier-free accessibility all contribute to a solid foundation while providing an integrated and responsive infrastructure to situate itself as part of a broad context of student services all engaged in supporting the University's mission statement.

**Accessibility Services  
University of Toronto St. George Campus  
Statistics – 2002-2003**

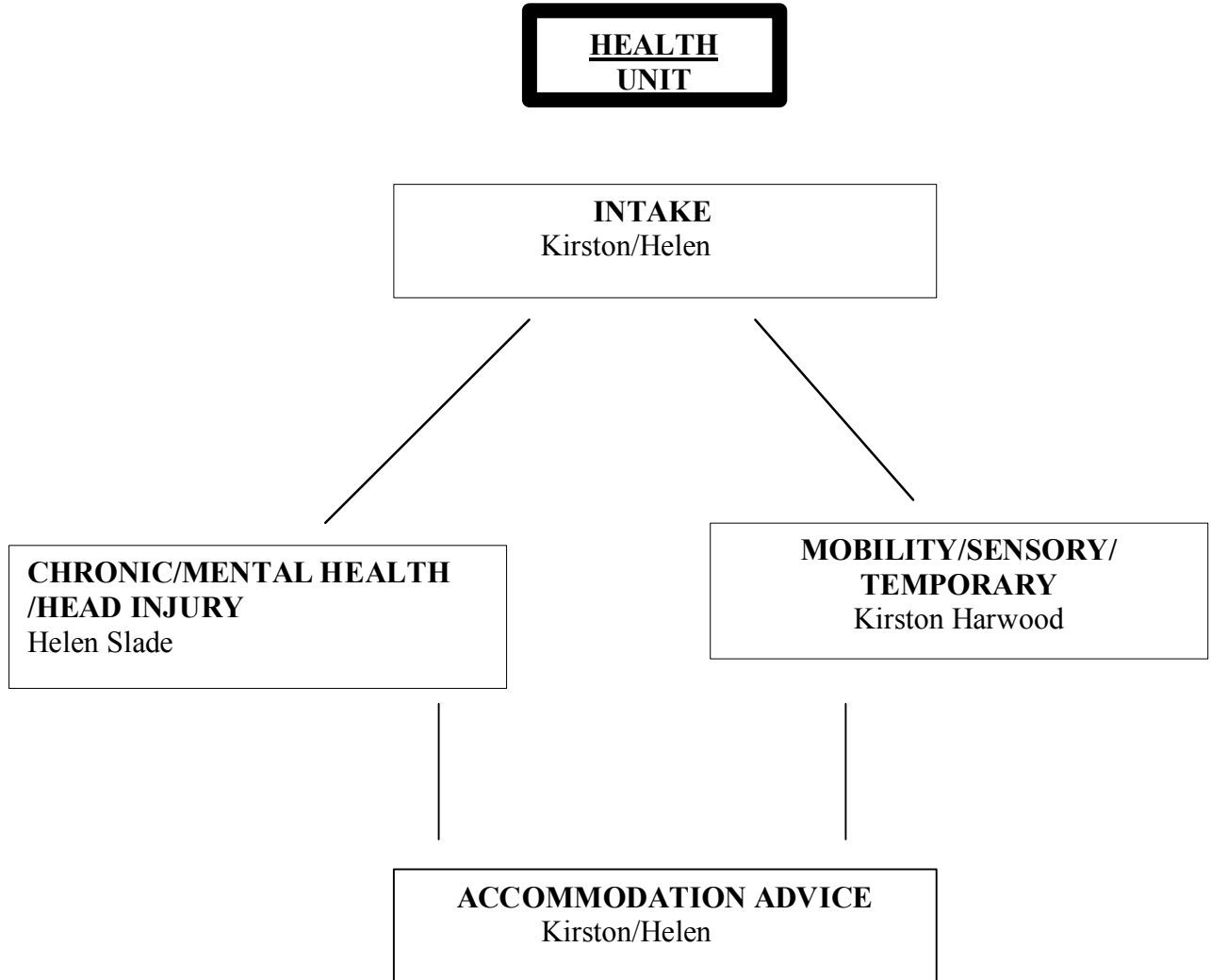
<b>Disability</b>	<b>2000-2001</b>		<b>2001-2002</b>		<b>2002-2003</b>	
	No. of Students	% of Students	No. of Students	% of Students	No. of Students	% of Students
Systemic/Chronic Medical	261	41%	215	27%	228	22%
Mobility/Functional	52	7%	79	10%	135	13%
Blind/Low Vision	33	4%	26	3%	29	3%
Deaf/Hard of Hearing	12	2%	13	2%	17	2%
Learning Disability/ ADD/ ADHD	327	41%	377	46%	471	46%
Multiple	94	12%	75	9%	146	14%
Other			21	3%	0	
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>779</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>806</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1026</b>	<b>100%</b>



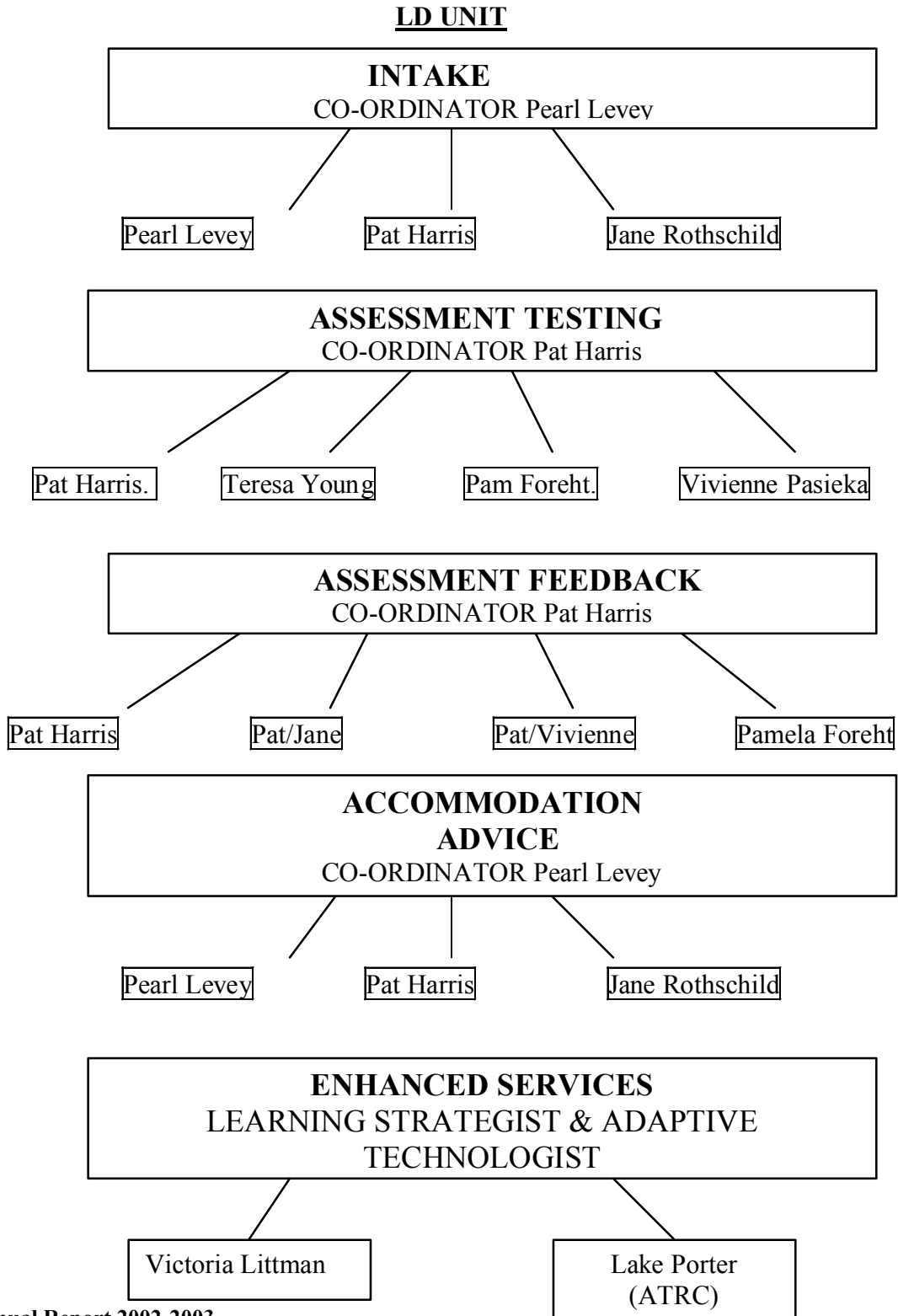


Spring 2003

INTAKE/ACCOMODATION  
COUNSELLING







## ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES

### TEST AND EXAM CENTER: STATISTICS FOR JUNE 2002 TO MAY 2003

#### NUMBER OF TESTS AND EXAMS

MONTH	# OF TESTS	# OF EXAMS	TOTAL TESTS AND EXAMS
JUNE 2002	134	91	225
JULY	88		88
AUGUST	52	124	176
SEPTEMBER	14		14
OCTOBER	390		390
NOVEMBER	280		280
DECEMBER	341	427	768
JANUARY 2003	111		111
FEBRUARY	442		442
MARCH	264		264
APRIL	293	480	773
MAY	3	401	404
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>2412</b>	<b>1523</b>	<b>3935</b>

**# OF LATE EXAM REQUESTS = 97**

**# OF CONFLICT CHANGES = 46**

**# OF STUDENTS = 523**