

# NEWS RELEASE



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## For Immediate Release

Monday, March 29, 2021

### **Halton Healthcare Pilots Accessible Wayfinding Technology at Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital**

Oakville, ON – In partnership with the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB), Halton Healthcare is piloting [BlindSquare](#), an innovative wayfinding system for people with sight loss. This initiative, being launched at Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital (OTMH), will create a more accessible experience by ensuring individuals with sight loss have the opportunity to navigate the hospital safely and independently.

This accessible indoor navigation system uses physical beacons and GPS data to deliver audio instructions to smartphones. The free and downloadable BlindSquare app, available on the Apple App Store, communicates detailed points of interest and provides directions for safe, reliable travel in both indoor and outdoor environments.

“Technology is a powerful tool in the hands of Canadians with disabilities and we are so thrilled to see this project take off at OTMH,” says Shane Silver, Vice President of Social Enterprises for CNIB. “BlindSquare’s technology will help patients, visitors and staff navigate the hospital safely and independently – something many of us take for granted. We are delighted that OTMH is the first hospital in the world to implement BlindSquare’s innovative technology.”

More than 30 BlindSquare beacons were installed throughout the OTMH facility to create a more inclusive experience for everyone. The customized audio messaging will offer BlindSquare users access to important spatial information, including everything from where to find the nearest entrance to how to navigate to specific areas such as the emergency department or food court.

“This technology empowers individuals who are blind or partially sighted to access OTMH independently. They can now audibly access information that was previously only available visually - like signs and maps,” explains Jack McCormick, Organizational Development Consultant, Halton Healthcare. “They no longer need to rely exclusively on touch and that’s especially important given the COVID-19 pandemic.”

This new initiative was funded by Halton Healthcare’s Innovation Grant Program that enables staff-driven projects aimed at improving patient, visitor and staff experience. This project will also enhance Halton Healthcare’s Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategy by reducing barriers to inclusion and enhancing independent experiences for people with sight loss. It elevates the organization’s accessibility practices beyond the compliance required by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

“We are proud to be partnering with CNIB and BlindSquare to increase accessibility at our Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital. This project is special as it was brought forward by Halton Healthcare staff through our Innovation Grant Program and will improve patient, visitor and staff experience,” said Denise Hardenne, President and CEO, Halton Healthcare. “This is just another example of what can be accomplished when our staff bring innovative ideas to work. Innovations like BlindSquare allow us to deliver on our goal of providing exemplary patient experiences, always.”

### **About Halton Healthcare**

Halton Healthcare is a healthcare organization comprised of three community hospitals - Georgetown Hospital, Milton District Hospital and Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital and several community programs and services. Together we provide healthcare services to nearly 400,000 residents in the communities of Halton Hills, Milton and Oakville. Halton Healthcare has been recognized for its best practices in a number of patient safety and patient care initiatives. For more information, visit [www.haltonhealthcare.com](http://www.haltonhealthcare.com)

### **About CNIB**

CNIB is a non-profit organization driven to change what it is to be blind today. We deliver innovative programs and powerful advocacy that empower people impacted by blindness to live their dreams and tear down barriers to inclusion. Our work as a blind foundation is powered by a network of volunteers, donors and partners from coast to coast to coast. To learn more or get involved, visit [www.cnib.ca](http://www.cnib.ca).

### **About BlindSquare**

BlindSquare is the world's most widely used accessible GPS-app developed for the blind, deafblind, and partially sighted. Paired with third-party navigation apps, BlindSquare's self-voicing app delivers detailed points of interest and intersections for safe, reliable travel both outside and inside. Open the doors to enhanced independence with BlindSquare. To learn more visit [blindsquare.com](http://blindsquare.com)

BlindSquare is available on iPhone or iPad. [Download the free "Event" app on the App Store.](#)

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