

MANITOULIN HEALTH CENTRE Accessibility Standards – Master Corporate Policy (<i>as delineated under AODA</i>)	POLICY: ADM-10-01	DEPARTMENT: Administration
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EFFECTIVE DATE: January 2010	DATE REVIEWED: (annually) June 2017
PREVIOUS POLICY: N/A	DISTRIBUTION: All Departments, Board of Directors

STATEMENT OF POLICY

Manitoulin Health Centre (MHC) recognizes our corporate and ethical obligations outlined within the *The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)*.

The purpose of the Act is to *achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises on or before January 1, 2025.*

This policy applies to all MHC personnel who interact with the public, whether they do so as employees, volunteers, agents, or otherwise.

Guiding Principles

In keeping with the principles set out in the AODA, the MHC is committed to providing access to those in need, in a respectful manner that focuses on the unique needs of each individual.

Thus, MHC will make reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies, procedures, and practices pertaining to the provision of goods and services to the public and other third parties to adhere to the following guiding principles as set out in Ontario Regulation 429/07:

- a) The goods or services must be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
- b) The provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities and others must be integrated unless an alternate measure is necessary, whether temporarily or on a permanent basis, to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use, or benefit from the goods or services.
- c) Persons with disabilities must be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use, or benefit from the goods or services.

Communication

When communicating with a person with a disability, personnel will do so in a manner that takes into account the person's disability and will make reasonable efforts to ensure that information is transferred and understood. A simple "can I help you" approach will

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form the basis of the approach. MHC personnel are encouraged to look for signs of comprehension, or confusion, during the exchange of information, providing clarity in a respectful way as required.

Use of Assistive Devices

MHC recognizes the importance of the use of assistive devices for persons with some disabilities and the positive contribution the devices may have on mobility and access. MHC will train staff in the use of devices provided by MHC (for example, walkers and wheelchairs). In addition, MHC realizes that persons with disabilities may use their own assistive devices while accessing services and so MHC encourages this practice as well.

Use of Service Animals

MHC recognizes that some people with disabilities utilize service animals as a method of assistance to their mobility. Service animals are permitted in non-patient care areas of MHC’s hospital sites. Patient care areas are not open to this practice, for infection control reasons. MHC staff recognize that service animals are not pets and will treat these animals accordingly.

In the patient care areas of MHC, persons requiring alternate assistance, due to the exclusion of service animals, staff will provide alternate guidance on an as-required basis, sensitive to the needs of the individual person’s disabilities.

Use of Support Persons

MHC understands that a person with disabilities may be accompanied by a support person. Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to enter the premises with his or her support person. At no time will a person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person be reasonably prevented from having access to his or her support person while under care at MHC. (Some procedural situations may require the supporting individual to temporarily be excluded).

Notice of Temporary Disruptions in Services and Facilities

- a) If there is a temporary disruption in those facilities or services in whole or in part that are essential to the access of services of persons with disabilities, MHC shall provide publically displayed notice of the disruption.
- b) The notice of the disruption will include information about the reason fro the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities or services, if any, that are available.

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- c) Notice may be given by posting the information at MHC’s hospital sites, by posting on the website or by such other method as is reasonable to the particular circumstance.

Training

- a) MHC will provide appropriate levels of training to all employees and agents who deal with the public (or other third parties acting on behalf of MHC) as well as those staff who are involved in the development and approvals of policies, practices, and procedures that deal with the provision of goods and services to the public or other third parties.
- b) Records of training will be kept in the Human Resources Department.
- c) Training will include the following topics:
 - i) The purposes of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005
 - ii) The requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service
 - iii) How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities
 - iv) How to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person
 - v) How to use the assistive devices at MHC
 - vi) What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing MHC’s services
 - vii) MHC’s policies, practices, and procedures relating to the provision of goods and services to the public and other third parties, and
- d) Staff will also be trained on an ongoing as needed basis when changes are made to the applicable policies or processes that affect persons with disabilities.

Feedback Process

- a) MHC welcomes feedback concerning our services, including comments on the effectiveness of our customer service processes for persons with disabilities; and
- b) Feedback regarding MHC’s provision of goods and services to people with disabilities can be made in person, by telephone, in writing, or by delivering email. Complaints will be addressed according to MHC’s policies concerning complaints.

Procurement

When it is required, Procurement activities shall consider and incorporate accessibility criteria when procuring goods, services, or facilities, except where it is not practicable to

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do so. Accessibility shall be considered as part of MHC’s annual capital review process.

Website Accessibility

MHC shall design and deploy website elements that consider the needs of persons with disabilities. Whenever major upgrades or rebuilds are undertaken to the website, elements such as font magnification and other tools shall be considered and deployed, where needed. Standards shall be referenced (WCAG 2.0, Level A).

Availability of the Accessible Customer Service Documents

MHC shall provide posted notice to the public stating that copies of corporate policies/procedures under the Act are available to the public. Thus, upon request, MHC shall provide copies of related documents in a reasonable manner. This information will be provided in a manner that facilitates communication with a person with disabilities.

REFERENCES

- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)
- Ontario Regulation 429/07 – Accessibility Standards for Customer Service
- Integrated Accessibility Standards
- Ministry of Community and Social Services (2009, April). *Guide to the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07.*

President & CEO
June 2017

Derek Graham

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