

STATEMENT of POLICY and PROCEDURE

Location: G Drive (G:\Orientation\ALL STAFF\Policies and Procedures\Accessibility (AODA))
Folder: All Staff Orientation
Subject: **Accessibility**



Scope:	All Staff, Providers and Volunteers	Effective/Issue Date:	June 17, 2010
Policy Owner:	Director, Human Resources	Last Reviewed/Revised:	March 6, 2014
		Next Review Date:	March 6, 2017
Issued by:	Senior Management Team	Pages:	5

PURPOSE:

In June, 2005 the Ontario government passed the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). The purpose of the Act is to develop, implement and enforce standards of accessibility for all Ontarians. Sherbourne's Accessibility Policy is consistent with AODA, 2005 and the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07.

POLICY STATEMENT:

Sherbourne Health Centre (SHC) is committed to ensuring that all interactions with the Centre are provided in a way that respects the dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity of all people, including individuals with disabilities. It is the responsibility of every staff member to be attentive to the concern of clients, their families/visitors, and other staff, and to resolve concerns related to accessibility.

This policy outlines practices and procedures in place at Sherbourne to help prevent, identify and remove barriers that may impede a person's ability to access the Centre.

DEFINITIONS:

Disability: According to the Ontario Human Rights Code, a disability is defined as,

- a. any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,
- b. a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
- c. a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
- d. a mental disorder, or
- e. an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

The definition includes disabilities of different severity, visible as well as non-visible disabilities, and disabilities the effects of which may come and go (Ontario Human Rights Code).

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Personal Assistive Devices and Measures: Supports made available by providers to improve access to care for clients with disabilities. For example, wheelchairs, volunteers, sign language interpreters, real-time captioning or Telephone Teletypes (TTY.)

Personal Assistive Devices: Personal supports used by persons with disabilities that enable them to carry out the activities of daily living and allow access to care and services. For example, walkers, personal oxygen tank, power-mobility devices such as power wheelchairs or scooters.

Service Animals: Animals are used by people with many different kinds of disabilities. Examples of service animals include dogs used by people who are blind, hearing alert animals for people who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing, and animals trained to alert an individual to an oncoming seizure and lead them to safety.

Support Person: Someone who accompanies a person with disability to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services. A support person may be a paid professional, a volunteer, a family member or friend.

PROCEDURE:

SHC will:

- 1.1 Take a person's disability into account when communicating with the individual.
- 1.2 Accommodate the use of personal assistive devices or any alternative measures used by people with disabilities to access care or services.
- 1.3 Ensure that people with disabilities are permitted to be accompanied by their service animals on the parts of our premises that are open to the public or other third parties, except where the animal is excluded by law. In such cases SHC will ensure that alternate measures are available to enable the person to access care or services. If it is not apparent the service animal is being used for the person's disability, a certificate confirming the animal has been trained by a professional institution may be requested.

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- 1.4 Permit people with disabilities to enter the parts of our premises that are open to the public or other third parties with their support person, and provide notice of any fee charged for the support person, where applicable.
- 1.5 Post a notice at a conspicuous place on our premises, on our website or another reasonable method, of any temporary disruption in access to facilities, care or services, including the reason, anticipated duration and any alternatives available. The notice will normally be posted at the main entrance and/or at or near the disrupted service. Depending on the nature of the disruption, notice may also be provided on outgoing telephone messages and on our website.
- 1.6 Ensure that our staff and providers who deal directly with the public and/or participate in the development of SHC policies and procedures, receive training about providing care and services to people with disabilities. This training will include current policies, practices and procedures outlined in this Accessibility policy. This includes instructions on how to interact and communicate with:
 - customers with various types of disabilities
 - people with disabilities who use assistive devices or require the assistance of a guide dog, service animal or service dog; or require the use of a support person
 - people who need instructions on how to use equipment devices that are available at our premises or that may help customers with disabilities
 - what to do if a customer with a disability is having difficulty accessing our services

All new employees shall receive the training as soon as reasonably possible on being hired. A training record including, participant names and dates is maintained by Human Resources.

We will also add a compliance commitment in our third party service contracts.

- 1.7 Make documents available upon request in a format that takes a person's disability into account within reason, and within available resources.
- 1.8 Make emergency or public safety information available to the public in an accessible format (or with communication supports) upon request.

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Feedback about Accessibility

Clients, staff, community members, or any member of the public may provide feedback on how our care and services are provided to people with disabilities, using our Feedback Form. The Feedback Form and Client Comments and Complaints Policy are available on our website, and at reception desks throughout the Centre. The policy explains the feedback process, including how SHC addresses comments, suggestions and complaints.

Alternatively, feedback may be provided by phone to the Director, Human Resources/Corporate Communication at (416) 324-4100, extension 5211.

Accessibility Plan

SHC has developed a multi-year accessibility plan that outlines how we will meet the requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards. The plan is available to the public on our website, or alternatively in an accessible alternative format upon request.

Employment Accessibility

SHC informs employment candidates (on the SHC website and in interview confirmations) to notify SHC of any accommodations required, which will be provided to the fullest extent possible.

Upon orientation, employees are informed by Human Resources of emergency procedures e.g. fire evacuation protocols. At this stage, or at any time, they may request adjustments to such protocols based on their disability. E.g. Assigning a 'buddy' during fire drills.

During employment, employees may submit requests for accommodation to their direct supervisor and Human Resources. Based on the specific request and the bona fide occupation requirements of the position, SHC will develop an Individual Accommodation Plan (IAP) in consultation with the employee and where necessary, their health care provider/s. Such plans may be requested for ongoing disabilities, or where the disability is temporary. e.g. A Return to Work (RTW) program for employees returning from a health-related leave.

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SHC will provide employment information (e.g. a job description) that is generally available to employees in an accessible format, upon request.

OPTIONS AVAILABLE: Not Applicable

ADMINISTRATION: Human Resources

RELATED REFERENCES: Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2013 – 2015
Client Rights and Responsibilities Statement
Client Comments and Complaints Policy

FORMS/PAPERWORK: Acknowledgement of Understanding form