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| TITLE: | Accessibility – Customer Service Standards | | |
| Manual/Policy#: | Corporate Manual A-10 | Division: | AGH/ FVM/ LCPS |
| Original Issue: | December 2009 | Issued by: | President & CEO |
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| Last Date Reviewed: | February 2022 | Cross References: | Accessibility Standards Training Manual Policy H05 Accessibility Employment Standards |

1. POLICY STATEMENT:

The Almonte General Hospital, Fairview Manor and Lanark County Paramedic Service (the “Organization”) are committed to providing goods and services in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. We are also committed to giving persons with disabilities the same opportunity to access our goods and services and allow them to benefit from the same services, in the same place and in a similar way as all other patients, residents and visitors to our facilities.

2. SCOPE:

This policy applies to all employees, medical staff and volunteers acting on behalf of the Hospital.

3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

Through the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) Ontario is working to make the province fully accessible to people with disabilities by 2025. Under the Act, the Province is developing five accessibility standards that organizations will be required to follow to identify, remove and prevent barriers to accessibility.

The Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07) came into force on January 1, 2008. The Almonte General Hospital, as a designated public service organization, is required to be in compliance with the standard by January 1, 2010. The standard sets requirements in a number of key areas and will be reviewed provincially at least every five years.

4. DEFINITIONS

“Alternative Service” – means a service generally intended to be temporary that approaches the desired result until such time as the barrier is removed or an equivalent service is put in place;

“Assistive Device” – means an auxiliary aid such as communication aids, cognition

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aids, personal mobility aids and medical aids (ex. canes, crutches, wheelchairs or hearing aids);

“Contractor” - means a company or person with a formal or informal contract to do a specific job on behalf of the Almonte General Hospital;

“Customer” - means any person who receives or seeks to receive goods or services directly or indirectly from the Almonte General Hospital;

“Disability” – means the same as the definition of disability found in the Ontario Human Rights Code;

“Equivalent” - means having similar effects;

“Service Animal” – means a service animal as defined in Ontario Regulation 429/07, as amended;

“Support Person” – means a support person as defined in Ontario Regulation 429/07, as amended.

5. PROCEDURE

5.1 Principles

The Organization shall use reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the following principles:

- 5.1.1 Goods or services will be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
- 5.1.2 Persons with disabilities will be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from the goods or services.
- 5.1.3 The Organization will communicate with persons with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability, including accessible notifications and responses to questions;
- 5.1.4 Organization employees will be trained to communicate and provide appropriate assistance and services in a manner that takes into account a person’s disability;
- 5.1.5 Where fees for goods and services are advertised or promoted by the Organization, it will provide advance notice of the amount payable, if any, in respect of a support person.

5.2 Notice of Temporary Disruptions

The Organization will provide notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services normally used by persons with disabilities.

5.3 Use of Assistive Devices, Support Persons and Service Animals.

5.3.1 The Organization will provide customers with assistance in the use of assistive devices.

5.3.2 A support person may accompany a person with disabilities in the access of goods and services.

5.3.3 A support animal may accompany a person with disabilities in the access of goods and services, unless otherwise excluded by law from the premises.

5.4 Documentation

The Organization notifies the public that documents related to accessible customer service, are available upon request by posting a notice on the website.

The Organization will provide these documents in an accessible format or with communication support, on request. We will consult with the person making the request to determine the suitability of the format or communication support. We will provide the accessible format in a timely manner and, at no additional cost.

5.5 Training

The Organization is committed to training all staff, medical staff and volunteers in accessible customer service, other Ontario accessibility standards and aspects of the *Ontario Human Rights Code* that relate to persons with disabilities.

The Organization will also train:

- all persons who participate in developing the organization's policies; and
- all other persons who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the organization.

5.5.1 IASR training will include:

- access to e-learning education
- copy of the Accessibility Standards Training Manual which includes information on the following:
 - a) The purposes of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and the requirements of the customer service standard
 - b) How to provide goods and services in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities;
 - c) How to interact and communicate with persons in a manner that takes into account their disabilities;
 - d) How to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person to access goods and services;

- e) How to use equipment or assistive devices available on Hospital premises or provided by the Hospital that may help with the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities;
- f) What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing the Hospital's goods and services;
- g) The process for persons to provide feedback to the Hospital about its provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities, and how the Hospital responds to the feedback and takes action on any complaint.

5.5.2 *Ontario Human Rights Code* training will include access to e-learning education: "Working Together: The Code and the AODA."

5.5.3 Accessibility Training:

- will be completed as soon as practicable after being hired and be trained on an ongoing basis when changes are made to these policies, practices and procedures.
- will relate to specific roles and probability of contact to the public
- will include maintaining records of the training including the dates on which the training was provided and the number of individuals to whom it was provided

To be compliant with training, proof of completion must be provided by either:

- the CPDMH Learning Management System; or
- documentation from another organization; or
- copy of certificate of completion from an external link; or
- signature tracked from a group education session

5.6 Feedback Process

Accessibility feedback from our customers provides the Organization with opportunities to learn and improve. The Organization recognizes the right of our customers to make a complaint, compliment or make suggestions on ways to improve our services.

The Organization ensures our feedback process is accessible to people with disabilities by providing or arranging for accessible formats and communication supports, on request. To assist the Organization in ensuring that the delivery of goods and service to those with disabilities is provided in an effective and timely manner, the customer is invited to provide their feedback in writing, in person, e-mail, or telephone, addressed to:

CEO – Almonte General Hospital
75 Spring Street
Almonte, ON K0A 1A0
Email: info@agh-fvm.com
Phone: 613-256-2514 x 2220
Fax: 613-256-8549
www.almontegeneral.com/accessibility

Customers can expect to hear back from the President & CEO and/or designate within 21 days of receipt by either in writing, in person, e-mail or telephone acknowledging receipt of feedback and will set out the action to be taken in response to any complaints.

6. REFERENCES

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07)

Ontario Human Rights Code

Access Forward Online Education: <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/learning/working-together-ontario-human-rights-code-and-accessibility-ontarians-disabilities-act>

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed every two years and / or amended when additional accessibility regulations are enacted by the Government of Ontario.