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| **SANTÉ MANITOUWADGE HEALTH****POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL** |
| DEPARTMENT: **PUBLIC PERSONELL** | POLICY/PROCEDURE NO.: IV-253 |
| DISTRIBUTION: **ORGANIZATIONAL** | DATE OF ISSUE:08/13 |
| SUBJECT: **ACCESSIBILITY – AODA: CUSTOMER**  **SERVICE POLICY/STANDARD**  | REVIEW/REVISION DATES: 09/15. 08/17, 10/19 |
| APPROVAL: Board of Directors |  |

**Background:** The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) was enacted in

2005 in order to facilitate the development of specific standards with respect to improving

accessibility across the province. Ontario’s first accessibility standard, the customer service

standard, came into force on January 1, 2008. The standard outlines what organizations must

do in order to ensure that customer service is accessible to everyone, including people with

disabilities.

**Purpose**:

* This policy establishes the accessibility standards for customer services for the

 Organization, in accordance with Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

(AODA), Customer Service Standard

* This policy applies to all employees, physicians, volunteers and agents of the

organization

* This policy provides guidelines for providing patient centred care to people with

Disabilities.

**Policy:**

Sante Manitouwadge Health (SMH) recognizes that persons with disabilities should be

provided with an equal opportunity to access goods and information in a manner consistent with

the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality as stated in the regulations of

the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. In fulfilling our Mission, SMH will strive at all times to ensure that its policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the core principles:

* Dignity and Independence – Customer service will be provided in a manner that respects

the dignity and independence of people with disabilities.

* Integrated Services – that allow people with disabilities to fully benefit from the same

services, in the same place and in the same or similar manner as other clients.

* Equal Opportunity – People with disabilities will be given an equal opportunity to use and

 benefit from services.

**Definitions:**

**Accessible** means customer service is provided in a manner that is capable of being easily

understood or appreciated; easy to get at; capable of being reached, entered; obtainable.

**Disability** means:

* Any degree of physical 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 impairment, 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.

* A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability
* A learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in

understanding or using symbols or spoken language,

* A mental disorder
* An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance

plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*.

**Procedure**:

Sante Manitouwadge Health is committed to excellence in serving all customers including

people with disabilities and we will carry out our functions and responsibilities in the following

areas:

**1. Communication**

We will communicate with people in ways that take into account their disability. Consideration

is given to the way in which individuals express, receive and process information without

making assumptions about a particular disability. AODA: Communicating with a Person with a

Disability

**2. Telephone Services**

We are committed to providing fully accessible telephone service to our customers.

We will offer to communicate with customers by alternate format if telephone communication is

not suitable to their communication needs or is not available. AODA: Accessible Equipment and

Services

**3. Assistive Devices**

We are committed to serving people who use assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from our

services. We will also ensure that the appropriate staff knows how to use the assistive devices

available on our premises for customers. These may include, but are not limited to, wheelchairs,

walkers, crutches, personal sound amplification devices. DRHC will make reasonable efforts to

ensure that assistive devices can be used to access services.

**4. Billing**

We are committed to providing accessible invoices to all of our customers. For this reason,

invoices will be provided in the following formats upon request: large print, e-mail or verbal

communication. We will answer any questions customers may have about the content of the

invoice in person, by telephone or email.

**5. Use of service animals**

We are committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service

animal on the parts of our premises that are open to the public and other third parties.

When a patient, family member or visitor enters the hospital with a service animal every effort

will be made to accommodate and ensure that the surroundings will allow the individual to

effectively maintain their relationship with the animal. If this is not possible due to health or

safety concerns, a mutually agreed upon location for the animal may be identified for a limited

time. In this instance, other provisions will be made to ensure that the individual receives the

assistance that the service animal otherwise provides. Service Animals – AODA

**6. Support Persons**

We are committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a support

person. Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to

have the support person present while on the premises unless it becomes a health or safety

risk. In this instance, other provisions will be made to ensure that the individual receives the

support otherwise provided by the support person. In some cases, it may be necessary to seek

the consent of the person with the disability prior to discussing confidential information in front of

the support person.

Fee/fare will not be charged for support persons.

Amount ($) 0.00 will be charged to the support person for admission to our premises..

**7. Notice of temporary disruption**

Notice of Service Disruptions must be provided when facilities or services that people with

disabilities may use to access SMH goods or services are temporarily unavailable or if the

goods or service are expected in the near future to be temporarily unavailable. This notice will

include the following information:

* Information about the disruption
* The reason for the disruption
* Anticipated duration
* Description of alternative facilities or services, if available
* Contact information

In the case of an unscheduled disruption, the notice will be placed at all public entrances,

customer service counters and at the location of the service disruption as soon as practically

possible. AODA: Notice of Disruption in Service

In the case of a scheduled disruption, SMH will post the Notice prior to the disruption, at the

physical location, on the website and if appropriate will advertise the disruption with local media

outlets (township website and community information board). The Notice will be posted to allow for sufficient time to inform clients. AODA: Notice of Disruption in Service

Patients may also be contacted by phone prior to an appointment to advise them of the

change/disruption and alternatives.

**8. Training for staff**

All employees, volunteers, physicians and others who deal with the public or other third parties

on behalf of SMH will be trained on policies, practices and procedures that affect the way

goods and services are provided to people with disabilities. Training for new employees will be provided during the general orientation before commencement of duties. This mandatory AODA training is provided though e learning.

Additional training will be provided to each person according to his or her needs and duties.

A record of the dates on which training is provided and the individuals to whom it is provided will be kept.

Staff will also be trained on an ongoing basis when changes are made to these policies,

practices and procedures.

**Training will include**:

* The purposes of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the

requirements of the customer service standard.

* How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities
* How to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the

assistance of a service animal or a support person

* How to use the equipment or devices available (eg TTY) that may help with the provision

of goods or services to people with disabilities

* What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing SMH services.
* SMH policies, procedures and practices relating to the customer service standard.
* All staff will be made aware of the Accessibility Advisory Committee members and contact information
* Questions regarding policy should be directed to Chair of Accessibility Advisory Committee of Santé Manitouwadge Health.

**9. Documentation and Feedback process**

The ultimate goal of SMH is to meet and surpass customer expectations while serving

customers with disabilities. Comments on our services regarding how well those expectations

are being met are welcome and appreciated.

Feedback regarding the way SMH provides goods and services to people with disabilities can

be made by letter, verbally, by email, or feedback card.

The process for feedback:

* All feedback will be directed to the Director of Clinical Support Services
* Clients can expect a response within 3 business days.
* Complaints will be addressed according to practices as established in the SMH

 complaint process.

The feedback process is promoted on the website, through internal patient satisfaction surveys

and surveys externally mailed to clients

**10. Modifications to this or other policies**

We are committed to developing customer service policies that respect and promote the dignity

and independence of people with disabilities. Therefore, no changes will be made to this policy

before considering the impact on people with disabilities. Any policy of MH that does not

respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be modified or

removed.

**11. Notice of availability of documents**

SMH will provide notice of the availability of the documents, required

by the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, (O. Reg 429/07) upon request.

Accessibility: Notice and Provision of Documents in Accessible Formats will be provided on the web site

**12. Format of documents**

Sante Manitouwadge Health shall upon request give a copy of the policies, practices

and procedures required under the Ontario Regulation 429/07 – Accessibility Standards for

Customer Service to any person. SMH will take into account the persons’ ability to access the

information and will provide the document or information contained in the document in a format

that meets those needs as agreed upon with the person.

13. Related Procedures/Resources

13.1 Service Animals - AODA

13.2 Accessibility: Notice and Provision of Documents in Accessible

Formats

13.3 AODA: Communicating with a Person with a Disability

13.4 AODA: Serving Customers with Disabilities: Putting People First

14.1 AODA: Acknowledgement of Customer Service Policies

14.2 AODA: Notice of Disruption