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## Accessibility – Accessible Customer Service

<b>Title: Accessibility – Accessible Customer Service</b>		<b>Policy No:</b>	<b>2.3.1</b>
		<b>Original Issue Date:</b>	November 19, 2009
<b>Manual/Section:</b>	<b>Administration</b>	<b>Last Review / Revision Date:</b>	March 23, 2023
<b>Department:</b>	<b>Corporate</b>	<b>Policy Lead:</b>	Director Quality, Patient Safety
<b>Approved By:</b>	<b>Leadership Committee</b>		

### 1. PURPOSE

Quinte Health strives to respect everyone while providing quality care and meeting the needs of everyone they serve. Quinte Health respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities and is committed to providing people with disabilities who attend the hospital as a visitor, patient, staff or volunteer the same access to care as those with no disabilities.

Quinte Health is committed to giving people with disabilities the same opportunity to access its programs and services and allowing them to benefit from the same services, in the same place and in a similar way as other individuals.

### 2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees of the organization, agents, volunteers and contracted service staff.

### 3. POLICY

Quinte Health is committed to excellence in serving all customers and to being responsive to the diverse needs of all its residents by striving to provide safe and equal access to its programs, services and facilities, in accordance with the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005. Quinte Health endeavours to ensure all persons with disabilities who visit, work for, or use the hospital facilities, services, and properties will have access to safe and barrier-free environments, programs and services.

## 4. PROCEDURE

### Use of Support Persons

Quinte Health recognizes that persons with disabilities may require the accompaniment of a support person when accessing the services of the hospital or visiting a patient in hospital and will ensure that reasonable efforts are made so that people with disabilities are not prevented from having access to their support person while on hospital premises.

- If a person with a disability is accompanied by a support person, they are permitted to enter the premises together and are not prevented from having access to each other while on the premises within the areas of the hospital that are open to the public.
- Special accommodations will be made to consider the accompaniment of a support person in areas otherwise restricted, such as the operating room.
- Where issues of confidentiality are concerned, guidance will be given to the support person and additional requirements may be necessary, such as signing a confidentiality agreement.

Use of guide dogs or service animals will be permitted at all times, unless excluded by law from the premises. Refer to Policy 2.3.4 Service Animals, Pet Visitation, and Therapy Dogs.

### Accessibility Devices

Assistive devices are used by people with disabilities to help with daily living. They include a broad range of products such as wheelchairs, walkers, white canes, oxygen tanks, and electronic communication devices that people may bring to the hospital.

Quinte Health will respect and accommodate the right of the individual to use a personal assistive device while accessing goods and services provided by the hospital.

- Each patient care department (ED and in-patient units) will have communication amplifiers (Pocket Talkers) available for use.
- Wheelchairs and other mobility aides are often available or will become so upon request. Contact the resource centre or the team leader/PCL from your area for further assistance if this equipment is not readily available.
- For the safety of patients, visitors and staff, the use of personal electronic mobility aides such as scooters or electric wheelchairs must be operated in a safe manner. Refer to policy 2.31 Life Safety - Electrical Appliances
- Services such as sign language interpretation and interpretation information available will be provided, as per policy 2.3.5 Interpretation Services. Notify team leader/PCL or manager for assistance as required.

### Disruption of Service

Public notification will be provided should there be any disruption (planned or expected) of facilities or services that are usually used by people with disabilities to access our goods or services. Notice will include:

- Reason for disruption of service
- Anticipated length of duration

- Description of alternate facilities or service if available

Notice will be provided through these means:

- Notices posted at main entrances and emergency entrance at relevant Quinte Health hospitals.
- Message of disruption posted on the external Quinte Health website
- Any other method as is reasonable in the circumstances

Notification of disruption applies for any location, technology or method that a person with a disability must use in order to access services at Quinte Health. The area/department that identifies the disruption shall be responsible for notifying Communications Department about disruption in service.

Advance notice will be given when the disruption is expected, and as soon as possible if the disruption is unexpected.

Disruptions to all services, such as during a power outage or during a labour dispute, do not require special notice. However, if the disruption has a significant impact on people with disabilities, notice should be provided.

### **Training**

Training, in compliance with The Ontario Human Rights Code and Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) will be provided as required to:

- a) all employees and volunteers
- b) all persons who participate in developing the organization's policies; and
- c) all persons who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the organization

Training delivery will be tailored to the needs of the above groups and training materials will be developed with the support of Education Services as required. Content will include a review of the purpose of the AODA, the requirements of this Regulation and instruction regarding customer service and human rights as it relates to persons with disabilities.

Compliance tracking will be maintained for all of the above groups in the following manner:

- Education Services will track compliance for employees and those who participate in developing the organization's policies
- Volunteer Services will track compliance for volunteers
- Medical Affairs will track compliance for physicians
- The Quinte Health Project Sponsor (the Quinte Health employee recognized as responsible for supervision of a service provider) will track compliance for those persons who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the organization

### **Feedback**

Quinte Health encourages and welcomes suggestions and feedback from patients and families on the accessibility of the services at Quinte Health.

- (a) By mail addressed to: Patient Experience Specialist  
265 Dundas Street E.  
Belleville, ON, K8N 5A9
- (b) In person at: Belleville Hospital – Quinte 3

- (c) By phone at 613-969-7400 extension 2033
- (d) By using the concern forum on the external Quinte Health website

Feedback will be responded to within two business days of its receipt by the hospital.

Confidentiality is highly respected and maintained.

## **APPENDICES AND REFERENCES**

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### **References:**

Government of Ontario (2019). Accessibility Laws. Retrieved October 29, 2019 from:  
<https://www.ontario.ca/page/about-accessibility-laws>

Ministry of Community and Social Services (2019). About the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA). Retrieved October 29, 2019 from:  
<https://www.mcscs.gov.on.ca/documents/en/mcscs/publications/accessibility/AboutAODAWeb20080311EN.pdf>

Quinte Health (2018). Occupational Health & Safety 11.2 Service Provider Safety Rules.

### **Cross References:**

2.3.4 Accessibility - Service Animals, Pet Visitation, and Therapy Dogs

2.3.5 Accessibility - Interpretation Services

2.31 Corporate - Life Safety – Electrical Appliances

3.11.11 Medical - External Healthcare Providers