

Intent

This policy is intended to meet the requirements of *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Ontario Regulation 429/07* under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, and applied to the provisions of goods and services to the public or other third parties, not to the good themselves.

All services provided by Grand River Community Health Centre (GRCHC) shall follow the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity, see the GRCHC's mission and values statements below:

Mission

Through collaboration and leadership, the Grand River Community Health Centre provides opportunities for the people of Brantford/Brant to lead healthier lives. GRCHC provides community-based primary health care and pursues wellness, health promotion and community development initiatives.

Values

Respect is the cornerstone to creating an inclusive non-judgmental service environment for our clients and a creative and supportive work environment for our staff and volunteers.

Accessibility to programs and services supports individuals in setting and achieving their **own health goals**.

Inter-professional and inter-agency **collaboration** is important to ensure that services are responsive and **client-centred**.

Partnerships within the health care sector and across sectors, improve services to our clients and our community.

Accountability to our clients, our community and our funders is integral to GRHC growth.

Definitions

Disability: the term disability as defined by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005, and the Ontario Human Rights Code, refers to:

- 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;
- a condition of mental impairment or developmental disability;
- a learning disability or dysfunction in one or more of the process involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
- a mental disorder; or
- an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurances plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

Customer Service: Standard of Accessibility Providing Goods and Services to People with Disabilities (AODA)

Assistive Devices: is a technical aid, communication device or other instrument that is used to maintain or improve the functional abilities of people with disabilities. Personal assistive devices are typically devices that customers bring with them such as a wheelchair, walker or a personal oxygen tank that might assist in hearing, seeing, communicating, moving, breathing, remembering and or reading.

Guide Dog: is highly-trained working dog that has been trained at one of the facilities listed in Ontario Regulations 58 under the *Blind Persons' Act*, to provide mobility, safety and increased independence for people who are blind.

Service Animal: as reflected in Ontario Regulation 429/07, an animal is a service animal for a person with a disability if:

- it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or
- if the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability

Service Dog: as reflected in *Health Protection and Promotion Act, Ontario Regulation 562* a dog other than a guide dog for the blind is a service dog if:

- it is readily apparent to an average person that the dog functions as a service dog for a person with a medical disability; or
- the person who required the dog can provide on request a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires a service dog.

Support Person: as reflected in *Ontario Regulation 429/07*, a support person means, in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies him or her in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or access to goods and services.

Customers: for the purpose of this policy, customers refers to users of GRCHC programs and services.

General Principles

In accordance with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulations 429/07, this policy addresses the following:

- A. The provisions of Good and Services to Persons with Disabilities;
- B. The Use of Assistive Devices
- C. The Use of Guide Dogs, Services Animals and Service Dogs
- D. The Use of Support Persons
- E. Notice of Service Disruptions
- F. Customer Feedback
- G. Training
- H. Notice of Availability and Format of Required Documents

A. The Provisions of Goods and Services to Persons with Disabilities

GRCHC is committed to ensuring that its policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity by:

- ensuring that all customers receive the same value and quality;
- allowing customers with disabilities to do things in their own ways, at their own pace when accessing good and services as long as this does not present a safety risk;
- using alternative methods when possible to ensure that customers with disabilities have access to the same services, in the same place and in a similar manner;
- taking into account individual needs when providing good and services;

Customer Service: Standard of Accessibility Providing Goods and Services to People with Disabilities (AODA)

- communicating in a manner that takes into account the customer's disability; and
- training staff who communicate with customers on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.

B. Assistive Devices

Customer's own Assistive Device(s):

Persons with disabilities may use their own assistive devices as required when accessing services provided by GRCHC.

In cases where the assistive device presents a safety concern or where accessibility might be an issue, other reasonable measures will be used to ensure the access of services.

Assistive Devices Provided by GRCHC:

Some assistive devices, such as wheelchairs, are available on a first come, first serve basis upon request, to assist customers in accessing services while in the CHC.

C. Guide Dogs, Service Animals and Service Dogs

A customer with a disability who is accompanied by a guide dog, service animal or service dog will be allowed access to premises that are open to the public.

Service animals are not permitted:

- Where food preparation is being undertaken, or otherwise disallowed by law.

In the rare case where a service animal is to be denied access to the facility or where service animals are prohibited by law, other accommodations shall be afforded, such as:

- Alternative meeting format, teleconference where technology permits; delivery of services at an alternative time or location; other assistive measures available to deliver a service to ensure an equality of outcome.

Care and Control of the Animal:

The customer who is accompanied by a guide dog, service dog/service animal is responsible for maintaining care and control of the animal at all times.

Allergies

If a health and safety concern presents itself, for example in the form of a severe allergy to the animal, GRCHC will make all reasonable effectors to meet the needs to all individuals.

D. Support Persons

GRCHC will ensure that clients with a disability who are accompanied by a support person are allowed to enter the premises together and that the customer is not prevented from having access to the support person.

There may be times where seating availability prevent the customer and support person from sitting beside each other. In these situations, GRCHC will make every reasonable attempt to resolve the issue.

In situations where confidential information might be discussed when a support person is present, consent will be obtained from the client prior to the discussion.

E. Notice of Disruption in Service

Customer Service: Standard of Accessibility Providing Goods and Services to People with Disabilities (AODA)

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in service, GRCHC will provide notice to its customers. This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, the anticipated duration of the disruption and a description of alternative measures, if appropriate and available.

When disruptions occur, GRCHC will provide notice by the following options:

- Posting notices in at the main entrance and nearest accessible entrance and/or on the GRCHC website.
- Broadcasting through local media (CKPC 92.1) when appropriate
- Verbally notifying clients when they are making appointments
- Contacting clients with appointments, when appropriate
- By any other method that may be reasonable under the circumstances. Note that options for notification will be determined by management and time, accessibility to site (for example in a weather emergency) and other factors may be taken into account.

F. Feedback process

GRCHC will provide individuals with the opportunity to provide feedback on the service provided to customers with disabilities. Comments on service can be made verbally or written.

Submit feedback to:

- Health Services Manager, Grand River Community Health Centre
- (519) 754-0777
- 347 Colborne Street, Brantford, Ontario N3S 3N2
- info@grchc.ca
- www.grandriverchc.ca

Individuals who provide formal feedback will receive acknowledgement of their feedback, along with any resulting actions based on concerns and complaints that were submitted.

G. Training

GRCHC will provide training to all employees, volunteers and others who deal with the public or other third parties on our behalf, and all those who are involved in the development and approvals of client service policies, practices and procedures. This will include, but is not limited to all staff, volunteers, and students.

This training will be included as part of the orientation program for all new personnel. Revised training will be provided in the event of changes to legislation, procedures and/or practices.

Training will include the following:

- The purpose 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 use the assistive devices available on our premises.
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing GRCHC services.
- GRCHC's policies, practices and procedures relating to the customer services standard.

H. Availability of Required Documents

Documents required under the AODA legislation are available upon request.

Source:

Compliance Manual:

Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005 (AODA)

Ministry of Community and Social Services, October 2008

Electronic Reference:

http://209.167.40.96/units/unit_cust-serv-reg/doc_workbook/lang_en/files/Compliance-Manual_EN.pdf