**Geraldton District Hospital**

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| **ACCESSIBILITY –** **CUSTOMER SERVICE**  |
| **Policy Number: AD-A7** | **Number of Pages: 4** |
| **Category: Administration** | **Distribution to: Organization-Wide,** **Accessibility Folder** **Hospital Website** |
| **Developed by:** **Revised by: Jo-Anne Nord, HR Intern** | **Original Date: December 2009** |
| **Approved by:**  | **Revised: April 2010****Revised: November 2012****Reviewed: November 2013****Revised: November 2015****Revised: September 2016** |
| **Signature:** | **Next Review Date: September 2018** |

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures and practices that will facilitate the implementation of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005 (AODA) and Ontario Regulations 429/07, Accessibility Standards for Customer Service. Nothing in this policy diminishes in any way the legal obligations of the Geraldton District Hospital with respect to persons with disabilities that are imposed under any other Act or otherwise imposed by law.

**POLICY:**

Goods and services provided by Geraldton District Hospital shall be accessible to persons with disabilities in a manner that is consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration, and equal opportunity as set out in the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service.

**Guide Dogs and Service Animals:**

Geraldton District Hospital welcomes all people with disabilities and their service animals. Service animals are allowed on the parts of our premises that are open to the public.

When Geraldton District Hospital staff cannot easily identify that an animal is a service animal, our staff may ask a person to provide documentation (template, letter or form) from a regulated health professional that confirms the person needs the service animal for reasons relating to their disability.

A service animal can be easily identified through visual indicators, such as when it wears a harness or a vest, or when it helps the person perform certain tasks.

A regulated health professional is defined as a member of one of the following colleges:

* College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario
* College of Chiropractors of Ontario
* College of Nurses of Ontario
* College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario
* College of Optometrists of Ontario
* College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario
* College of Physiotherapists of Ontario
* College of Psychologists of Ontario
* College of Registered Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists of Ontario

If service animals are prohibited by another law, Geraldton District Hospital will do the following to ensure people with disabilities can access our goods, services or facilities:

* Explain why the animal is excluded
* Discuss with the customer another way of providing goods, services or facilities

**Support Person:**

A person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to have that person accompany them on our premises and will not be prevented from having access to each other while accessing services on the premises.

Where fees for goods and services are applicable, Geraldton District Hospital will include the amount payable by the support person in advance.

In certain cases, the Geraldton District Hospital might require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person for the health or safety reasons of:

* The person with a disability
* Others on the premises

Before making a decision the Geraldton District Hospital will:

* Consult with the person with a disability to understand their needs
* Consider health or safety reasons based on available evidence
* Determine if there is no other reasonable way to protect the health or safety of the person or others on the premises

Where fees for goods and services are applicable when a support person is required by the Geraldton District Hospital, the Hospital will waive such fees.

**Disruption of Services:**

Notice of a disruption of facilities or services used by persons with disability to access goods and services provided by Geraldton District Hospital shall be communicated to the public. The notice will include the reason for the disruption, the anticipated duration of the disruption and alternatives that may be available. This information will be posted in a conspicuous place in the premises or by other methods considered reasonable. If the disruption is expected, a reasonable amount of advance notice will be given. If the disruption is unexpected, notice will be provided as soon as possible.

**Assistive Devices:**

A person with disability who requires assistive devices to access the goods or services of Geraldton District Hospital shall be allowed to use such devices while accessing goods and services on the premises. Geraldton District Hospital provides some assistive devices for use by clients who require them while accessing goods and services on the premises (see policy R-A4).

**Communication:**

Staff will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability.

**Teletypewriter (TTY) and Bell Relay Services:**

A teletypewriter is a device that allows users to send typed messages across phone lines. Many people with hearing disabilities use a TTY. TTY users can communicate directly with another TTY user or they can call a Relay Service. The Relay Service operator will receive the messages on a TTY and relay the messages, by standard phone, to a person who does not have a TTY. A standard phone user can also place a call through the Relay Service operator to a TTY user.

Geraldton District Hospital does not have a TTY device however the Bell Relay Service can be utilized calling 1-800-855-0511.

**Training:**

Training on the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities shall be provided to all employees, volunteers, agents, contractors and others who deal with the public and to every person who participates in the development of policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods and services to members of the public.

Training for current employees will be provided by January 1, 2010 and included in the orientation of new employees thereafter. Geraldton District Hospital will also provide on-going training in respect to changes in its policies, practices and procedures to those individuals who require such training as soon as practical.

The basic training will include:

* A review of the purposes of the AODA and requirement of the customer service standard.
* How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities.
* How to interact with persons with disabilities who use assistive devices or require the assistance of a guide dog, other service animals or a support person.
* How to use and or access equipment or devices available in the organization, such as wheelchairs, elevators, lifts, etc. that may help a person with a disability access our goods or services.
* What to do if a person with a particular disability is having difficulty accessing our goods or services.

**Feedback:**

The public can provide feedback on the accessibility of goods or services available at Geraldton District Hospital by:

* Completing a client comment card available throughout the hospital (policy AD-C1).
* Submitting a complaint as per hospital complaint policy (AD-C4).
* Submitting a compliment as per hospital compliment process policy (AD-C5).
* Sending a letter addressed to the Chief Executive Officer, 500 Hogarth Avenue, Geraldton, ON, P0T 1M0.
* Contacting the Chief Executive Officer in person, by phone at 807.854.4107 or by email at lbonanno@geraldtondh.com.
* Other feedback processes will be established in consultation with individual persons with a disability, upon request.

**Note**: a copy of the ODA, 2001 and AODA, 2005 are available in the Accessibility folder on the common drive.