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	Accessibility for People with Disabilities			Human Resources

Version Number	Description of Changes	Effective Date
3	Annual Revision – General Revision of details	2022-05-01

Policy Statement

HGH is committed to providing accessibility as required by legislation. The hospital is committed to giving people with disabilities the same opportunity to access its services and allow them to benefit from the same services, in the same place and in a similar way to other patients/clients. It is important for the hospital to ensure that measures are in place to allow adequate access for people with disabilities.

HGH will establish policies, practices and procedures on providing goods and services to people with disabilities. Where possible, these will be consistent with the core principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity.

Background

To ensure accessibility for people with disabilities within our organization is achieved and to ensure compliance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and the *Customer Service Standard 2008*. HGH combines all of the requirements of the AODA Accessible Standards for Customer Regulations with the requirements of AODA Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation in the creation of this Accessibility policy.

The Accessibility Committee has the responsibility to ensure that the HGH is in compliance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and the *Customer Service Standard 2008* with the requirements of AODA Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation. The committee's responsibilities include the annual filing of accessibility reports with the appropriate Ministry under the Act.

Definitions

Barrier: Anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an informational or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice.

Disability:

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

Guide Dog: Guide dog is defined in section (1) of the Blind Persons' Rights Act and means a dog trained as a guide for a blind person and having the qualifications prescribed by the regulation.

Service Animal: An animal described in subsection (9) of the Blind Persons' Rights Act. An animal is a service animal

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for a person with a disability

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

Accessible Formats may include but are not limited to large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, Braille and other formats usable by persons with disabilities.

Communication Supports may include but are not limited to captioning, alternative and augmentative communication supports, plain language, sign language and other supports that facilitate effective communications.

Kiosk is an interactive electronic terminal, including a point-of-sale device, intended for public use that allows users to access one or more services or products or both.

Support Person: In relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies him or her in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods and services.

Procedure

HGH is committed to ensuring equal access to services for all people with disabilities. As a minimum, HGH is prepared to do what is required to ensure that the criteria stipulated in the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and the *Customer Service Standard 2008 with the requirements of AODA Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation* are met. In order to help to meet these requirements, the HGH has established the Accessibility Committee. This committee has a clear mandate to ensure conformity to the requirements of the aforementioned regulations. The mandate and description of their plan of action are detailed in the annual Accessibility Plan, which is published and available on the HGH website and is submitted to the Ministry as per requirements. Actionable items identified in the plan will also be published on the Intranet for information and progress reasons. The multi-year accessibility plan will be reviewed and updated at least once every five years.

Any member of the organization may bring issues of concern related to accessibility for all to the attention of the committee via direct communication with a member, email, internal mail or by documenting it on the *ADM-04-3002: Incident Report* form, in which case the Quality Office will ensure that the information is provided to the committee.

Complaints will be addressed through the appropriate person and may be made by email, verbally or in writing.

Changes required for the implementation of all actionable items must follow the usual process for change as described by the service involved. For example, changes to the physical aspects of the environment are requested through Octopus, the Maintenance Department tracking system. All suggested changes to procedures must be evaluated by the service involved and must also ensure that documentation is modified accordingly as per *ADM-04-101: Document Management and Control*.

Assistive devices: People accessing HGH services are entitled to use their own personal assistive devices to access services.

Persons with disabilities are permitted to be accompanied by their guide dog or service animal in those areas of the HGH open to the public, unless such animal is excluded by another law. If excluded by law, other measures will be used to provide services to the person with a disability.

People with a disability who use a support person are entitled to bring that person with them while accessing services at HGH. At no time will a person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person be prevented from having access to his or her support person while on HGH premises.

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Vehicles for the transportation of physically disabled passengers are not available at our institution.

When a patient comes to the HGH and requires assistance, it is the responsibility of all staff to be informed of the measures or mechanisms available to assist people with disabilities. Staff is required to inform their clients of the following mechanisms available to them, when required. HGH is committed to excellence in serving all patients/clients including people with disabilities and will carry out its functions and responsibilities:

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION STANDARDS PROCEDURES

1. Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

The Hospital, upon request and in consultation with the person making the request, provides or makes arrangements to provide accessible formats and communication supports for person with disabilities in accordance with AODA Integrated Standards Regulation. Accessible formats and communication supports will be provided in a timely manner, taking into account the person’s accessibility needs and at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons.

2. Accessible Websites and Web Content:

Internet websites and web content controlled directly by HGH or through a contractual relationship that allows for modification of the product conform to the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, at level A and AA in accordance with the schedule AODA Integrated Accessibility Standards.

3. Emergency Procedures, Plans and Information:

The HGH will provide all existing public emergency procedures, plans and public safety information, upon request in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports in a timely manner.

4. Employment Standards:

Recruitment

HGH will post information about the availability of accommodations for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment process. HGH will consult any applicant who requests an accommodation in a manner that takes into account the applicant’s disability.

5. Accessible Formats and Communication Supports for Employees

HGH will consult with the employee to provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports.

6. Workplace Emergency Response Information

If an employee’s disability is such that workplace emergency response information is necessary and HGH is aware of the need for accommodation, this information will be provided to employees. The information will undergo review when the employee moves to a different location, and when HGH reviews its general emergency response plan.

7. Documented Individual Accommodation Plans

A written process (RTW) for the development and maintenance of documented individual accommodation plans will be developed for the employees with disabilities. Return to work process will have in place documented return to work process for employees returning to work due to disability and requiring related accommodations. This return to work process will outline the steps that the hospital will take to facilitate the return to work.

8. Notice of service disruption

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Physical Barriers

Notice will be provided, where possible, when facilities or services relied on by persons with a disability are temporarily disrupted. Such notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities or services, if any, that are available. The notice will be placed at all public entrances and service counters on HGH premises.

Accessibility Planning for New Construction and/or Renovation

The planning and actual execution of any new construction and/or renovation projects will meet all codes and regulations pertaining to persons with disabilities. Qualified architects and engineers will be involved in its design and specifications if required.

1. Any new construction and/or renovation project will include, in its planning, the design and an evaluation as to the requirements to meet the needs of persons with disabilities.
2. Prior to the final approval of any new project, the architect will certify that all designs and specifications are in accordance with the Ontarians with Disabilities Act.
3. If a situation occurs where we are uncertain of the need, the person responsible for planning will consult with an architect or mechanical engineer, whichever is appropriate under the circumstances.
4. All renovations will be done according to the specifications provided and will meet all standards of Ontario Regulation 429/07.

TRAINING

HGH will provide training to all employees, volunteers and others who deal with the public or other third parties on their behalf, and all those who are involved in the development and approvals of customer service policies, practices and procedures whether or not they are directly involved in providing goods and services. This mandatory training will be provided to current staff and on orientation of new staff. Staff will also be trained on an ongoing basis when changes are made to these policies, practices and procedures.

Training will include the following:

The purposes of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and the requirements of the *Customer Service Standard 2008*, including the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation*;

- How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities;
- How to communicate with patients/clients over the telephone in clear and plain language and to speak clearly and slowly;
- 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 assistive devices available on HGH premises or otherwise that may help with the provision of good and services to people with disabilities;
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing HGH's goods and services;
- HGH's policies, practices and procedures relating to the customer service standards that affect the way goods and services are provided to people with disabilities.

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References (Legislation, regulation, supporting and HGH-related documents)

The Ontarians with Disabilities Act, (ODA), September 2002.

The Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration Web Site at: www.gov.on.ca/citizenship/accessibility.

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA).

The Blind Persons' Rights Act.

Guide to the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07.

HGH Annual Accessibility Plan.

Appendix A – <Insert appendix title>

Appendix B – <Insert appendix title>