

Policy and Procedure			
Manual	Human Resources	Policy HR12.1	
Policy Title	Accessible Customer Service	Effective	October 2019
Issued By	Leadership Team	Review	October 2020
Cross Reference	Accessibility for Ontarians With Disabilities Act (AODA) Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) Ontario Human Rights Code Occupational Health and Safety Act		
Forms			
Accreditation Standard			

Providing goods, services or facilities to people with disabilities

Hospice Niagara is committed to meeting its current and ongoing obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code respecting non-discrimination.

Hospice Niagara understands that obligations under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)* and its accessibility standards do not substitute or limit its obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code or obligations to people with disabilities under any other law.

Hospice Niagara is committed to complying with both the *Ontario Human Rights Code* and the *AODA*. Hospice Niagara is committed to excellence in serving all customers including people with disabilities.

Our accessible customer service policies are consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity for people with disabilities.

Assistive devices

People with disabilities may use their personal assistive devices when accessing our goods, services or facilities.

In cases where the assistive device presents a significant and unavoidable health or safety concern or may not be permitted for other reasons, other measures will be used to ensure the person with a disability can access our goods, services or facilities.

We will ensure that our staff are trained and familiar with various assistive devices we have on site or that we provide that may be used by clients and visitors with disabilities while accessing our goods, services or facilities.

Communication

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

We will work with the person with a disability to determine what method of communication works for them.

Service animals

We welcome people with disabilities and their service animals. Service animals are allowed on the parts of our premises that are open to the public. Sensitivity of residents and visitors who are allergic to or

uncomfortable with animals will be respected however, people requiring the use of service animals will be supported.

When we 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, we 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 persons

A person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to have that person accompany them on our premises.

In certain cases, Hospice Niagara 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, Hospice Niagara 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

A personal support person may be required to sign a confidentiality agreement.

Notice of temporary disruption

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities for customers with disabilities, Hospice Niagara will notify customers promptly. This clearly posted notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated length of time, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

The notice will be publicly available in the following ways:

- posted on the main doors
- posted on the website
- and families with planned admissions will be notified by phone

Training

Hospice Niagara will provide accessible customer service training to:

- all employees and volunteers
- anyone involved in developing our policies
- anyone who provides goods, services or facilities to customers on our behalf.

Staff will be trained on accessible customer service as soon as practicable and will be provided on an ongoing basis for updates in legislation, changes to Hospice policies and procedures governing the provision of services to persons with disabilities.

Training will include:

- purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the customer service standard
- Hospice Niagara's policies related to 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 on-site or otherwise that may help with providing goods, services or facilities to people with disabilities.
- what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing [organization name]'s goods, services or facilities

Feedback process

Hospice Niagara welcomes feedback on how we provide accessible customer service. Customer feedback will help us identify barriers and respond to concerns.

Customers who wish to provide feedback on the way Hospice Niagara provides goods, services or facilities to people with disabilities can provide feedback in the following way(s):

- in person
- by mail (403 Ontario St., Unit 2, St. Catharines, ON, L2N 1L5)
- by email (ynasri@hospiceniagara.ca)
- phone (905-984-8766 Ext. 269)
- fax (905-646-3860)

Feedback will be directed to the Manager, Human Resources & Development.

Customers can expect to hear back within 5 business days.

Hospice Niagara will make sure our feedback process is accessible to people with disabilities by providing or arranging for accessible formats and communication supports, on request.

Notice of availability of documents

Hospice Niagara will notify the public that documents related to accessible customer service, are available upon request by posting a notice in the following location(s)/way(s):

- Website
- Family Rooms
- Families with planned admissions will be notified

Hospice Niagara will provide this document in an accessible format or with communication support, on request. We will consult with the person making the request to determine the suitability of the format or communication support. We will provide the accessible format in a timely manner and, at no additional cost.

Modifications to this or other policies

Any policies of Hospice Niagara that do not respect and promote the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity for people with disabilities will be modified or removed.