

Policy Number	Category	Policy Title	Date Adopted	Review Schedule
X.X	Human Resources	Section x Corporate and People Services Customer Service Policy - Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities	Senior Management Review: Senior Management Approval:	Every two (2) years
Issue Date: 22/10/2009			Review Date: 04/12/2014	
Scope: All Staff			Next Review: 18/12/2016	

I POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA), has as its stated purpose: *to achieve accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises on or before January 1, 2025.*
- 1.2 This policy applies to LHIN staff who deal with the public or other third parties as well as persons involved in developing policies, procedures and practices pertaining to the provision of goods and services to the public or other third parties, whether they do so as employees, volunteers, agents (Service Providers) or otherwise.

II PURPOSE

- 2.1 The Local Health Integration Network must meet the requirements of accessibility standards established by AODA regulations. Ontario Regulation 429/07 – Accessibility Standards for Customer Service – apply to every designated public sector organization and to every other person or organization that provides goods or services to members of the public or other third parties and that has at least one employee in Ontario.

This policy establishes the accessibility standards for Customer Service for LHIN, in accordance with the requirements of Ontario Regulation 429/07. The standards outlined in this policy will be implemented by the LHIN by January 1, 2010.

III DEFINITIONS

The AODA and Ontario Regulation 419/07 contain and refer to various definitions that are relevant to this policy, some of which are set out below.

- 3.1 **Disability means:**
 - 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 a developmental disability,
- a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes 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 insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*; (“handicap”).

3.2 Barrier means:

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 information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice; (“obstacle”)

3.3 Guide dog:

A dog trained as a guide for a blind person and having the qualifications prescribed by the regulations; (Blind Persons’ Rights Act 1990 s1 (1)).

3.4 Service animal:

An animal acting as a service animal 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.

3.5 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 or services.

IV GENERAL

- 4.1 In keeping with the principles set out in the AODA, the LHINs’ vision states: A healthier community for all. The LHIN is committed to providing respectful services that focus on the unique needs of each individual.

To achieve this, the LHIN shall make reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies, procedures and practices pertaining to the provision of goods and services to the public and other third parties adhere to the following guiding principles as set out in Ontario Regulation 429/07:

1. The goods or services must be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
2. The provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities and others must be integrated unless an alternate measure is 'necessary, whether temporarily or on a permanent basis, to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the goods or services'.
3. Persons with disabilities must be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from the goods or services.

V RESPONSIBILITY

- 5.1 LHIN is committed to excellence in serving all customers including people with disabilities and will carry out our functions and responsibilities in the following areas:

A. Communications:

The LHIN supports an accessible Ontario where the independence and integration of those with disabilities is promoted. When communicating with a person with a disability, individuals working on behalf of LHIN shall do so in a manner that takes into account the person's disability and will make reasonable efforts to have the person with a disability understand both the content and intent of its communications.

B. Use of Assistive Devices:

LHIN is committed to servicing people with disabilities who use assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from our goods and services. The LHIN will ensure that staff is trained on or about the assistive devices made available by LHIN and realize that persons with disabilities may use their own assistive devices to access LHIN goods and services.

C. Use of Support Animals:

The LHIN is committed to welcoming people with disabilities and their service animals on the parts of our premises that are open to the public and other third parties and will permit the person to keep the service animal with them. The LHIN will also ensure that all persons to whom this policy applies have been trained on how to interact with people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal.

If the service animal is excluded by law from LHIN premises or is unable to accommodate a person with a disability in our facility due to situations beyond our control, such as others who have allergies to animals, the LHIN shall ensure that measures are available to permit persons with disabilities to access our goods and services through other means.

D. Use of Support Persons:

The LHIN is committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person. Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to enter LHIN's premises with his or her support person. 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 LHIN premises.

In the event that a fee is charged in relation to a support person's presence on LHIN premises, advanced notice of the fee will be provided.

On occasion persons with disabilities require the assistance of a support person to protect their health and safety or the health and safety of others. If necessary, the LHIN may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person while on LHIN premises for the purpose of protecting the health and safety of the person with the disability or others on the premises.

E. Notice of Temporary Disruptions in Services and Facilities:

In order to obtain, use or benefit from the LHIN's services, persons with disabilities usually use particular facilities or services of the LHIN. If there is a temporary disruption in those facilities or services in whole or in part, the LHIN shall give notice of the disruption to the public.

The notice of disruption 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. Notice may be given by posting the information at a conspicuous place on premises owned or operated by the LHIN, by posting it on the LHIN's website or by such other method as is reasonable in the circumstances.

F. Training:

The LHIN will ensure appropriate levels of training to all employees, volunteers, students, agents and others who deal with the public or other third parties on behalf of LHIN as well as those who are involved in the development and approvals of policies, practices and procedures dealing with the provision of goods and services to the public or other third parties.

This training will be provided to all staff as soon as practicable in keeping with Ontario regulation 429/07.

Records of the training will be maintained by the appropriate departments and include the dates on which training occurred and the number of persons trained.

Training will include the following topics:

- Purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005
- The requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service
- 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 assistive devices available at LHIN offices and otherwise made available by the LHIN for persons with disabilities
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing LHIN goods and services
- LHIN's policies, practices and procedures relating to the provision of goods and services to the public and other third parties.

Staff will be trained on an ongoing basis when changes are made to policies, practices and procedures dealing with the provision of goods and services to the public and other third parties. New employees, including volunteers and students will receive training as part of the LHIN Corporate Orientation Program.

G. Feedback Process:

In keeping with Local Health Integration Network 'Vision' – **A healthier community for all,**

the ultimate goal of the LHIN is to meet and surpass customer expectation while serving customers with disabilities. Comments on the LHIN services regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcome and appreciated.

Feedback regarding the way the LHIN provides goods and services to people with disabilities can be made in person, by telephone, in writing or by delivering an electronic text by email, storage device other reasonable methods.

Complaints will be addressed according to complaints categories already established in the LHIN Event Tracking Management System (ETMS).

H. Availability of Accessible Customer Service Documents:

The LHIN shall prepare any additional documents describing its policies, practices and procedures as may be required by Ontario Regulation 429/07 and, upon request, shall give a copy of such documents to any person. Further, the LHIN shall notify persons to whom it provides goods and services that the documents required under the Ontario Regulation 429/07 are available upon request.

The LHIN shall give the person the documents, or the information contained in the documents described above, in a format that takes into account the person's disability.

Modifications to this or other policies:

The LHIN is committed to developing customer service policies that respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. Therefore, no changes will be made to this policy before considering the impact on people with disabilities. LHIN will consider the modification or removal of any policies that do not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities on an ongoing basis.

VI ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- Visitor Policy; Meeting Room Rental for External Partners Policy and Procedure; Meeting Room Booking for External Partners Procedure; Notice of Temporary Disruptions Procedure, Customer Service Procedures; Telephone and Voice Mail Standards; Occurrence Report Tracking System Procedure
- Forms: Meeting Room Booking for External Partners
- Appendices: Notice of Temporary Disruptions template
- Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy and Multi-year Accessibility plan
- Related Documents
- Other: Accessible Customer Service Training for LHIN's – OALHIN document; Video URL

VII REFERENCE/CONSULTATION

7.1 Ontario Regulation 429/07

7.2 LHIN – Vice President, Human Resources and Organizational Development

CENTRAL WEST LOCAL HEALTH INTEGRATION NETWORK
Policy And Procedure Manual

Chief Executive Officer

Date