

# Customer Service: Providing Services to People with Disabilities

For Policy Office Use Only

☒ Administrative ☐ Clinical

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**Policy Sponsor:** People, Strategy & Performance

**Scope/Impact:** This policy applies to all CHEO staff, medical staff, students, volunteers and CHEO "customers"

**Keywords:** Disability, Accessibility

## 1. PURPOSE:

In fulfilling our mission, CHEO strives at all times to provide its goods and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities.

## 2. POLICY:

CHEO is committed to ensuring people with disabilities have full access to services and benefit from the same services, in the same place and in a similar way as other customers.

## 3. RESPONSIBILITIES:

### 3.1 Questions about this policy

Questions about the purpose or content of this policy should be referred to the Patient/Family Representative and Coordinator for Patient/Family Centred Care.

### 3.2 Feedback process

Feedback regarding the way CHEO provides services to people with disabilities can be made verbally, through e-mail or written documentation. All feedback will be directed to the Patient/Family Representative and addressed according to CHEO's Compliments and Concerns policy. Patients and families can expect to hear back within two (2) business days.

### 3.3 Modifications to this or other policies

In order to respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities, no changes will be made to this policy before considering the impact on people with disabilities. All CHEO policies will be reviewed to ensure content respects and promotes the dignity and independence of people with disabilities.

## 4. PROCEDURE:

### 4.1 Communication

CHEO staff, medical staff, students and volunteers will be educated to interact and communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability.

Accessible Formats and Communication Supports: CHEO will, upon request, provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats or communication supports for people with disabilities. This will be done in consultation with the person making the request, in a timely manner that takes into account the person's accessibility needs and, where applicable at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons.

### 4.2 Telephone services

Staff will be encouraged to communicate with customers over the telephone in clear and plain language and to speak clearly and slowly

If telephone communication is not suitable, staff may communicate with customers by other methods (e-mail, Telephone Typewriter - TTY, written notes, or in person).

Any patient related communication delivered by phone must follow the Telephone Practice Policy.

#### **4.3 Assistive devices**

CHEO will ensure that appropriate staff are trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by customers with disabilities to obtain, use or benefit from our services.

CHEO will also ensure that staff know how to use assistive devices available on our premises as appropriate to their work.

#### **4.4 Billing**

To ensure accessible invoices to all of our customers, CHEO's finance department is able to provide invoices in the following formats upon request: in person, hard copy, fax & email.

The finance department will also respond to any questions customers may have about the content of the invoice in person, by telephone, by letter or by e-mail.

#### **4.5 Use of service animals and support persons**

As per our Service Animal Policy and the AODA, all service animals are permitted by law as outlined in the AODA unless the animal is excluded by law.

All staff, volunteers and others dealing with the public will receive education and/or have access to resources on CHEOnet on how to interact with people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal as per our Service Animal policy.

Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person is welcome to enter CHEO's premises with their support person. Any situation that would require the separation of individual and support person (eg. medical procedures) will be discussed with the individual in advance and appropriate measures taken.

Fees are not charged for admission to CHEO's premises. In the event that CHEO organizes an event requiring admission rates, advertisement and communications for the event will clearly state that support persons are welcome and that any necessary arrangements should be made on an individual basis with the event organizers in advance of the event. Customers will be informed of this by a notice that will be posted on CHEO's website and advertising fliers.

#### **4.6. Notice of temporary disruption**

CHEO will provide customers with notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption of facilities or services usually used by people with disabilities (i.e. elevators/access ramps/handicap parking/TTY phones/handicap washrooms etc.) This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available. Information pertaining to the disruption will be posted at the location (see appendix A) as well as on the CHEO website following the hospital's Media Relations Procedure for notifying the public.

#### **4.7 Education for staff**

CHEO will provide education to all employees, volunteers and others who deal with the public or other third parties on their behalf. Education will be in the format of group information sessions, pamphlets and web based training modules.

This training will be provided to new staff as part of the employee orientation process and will include the following:

- The purposes 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 interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person
- How to access equipment and information available at the hospital that may help with the provision of goods or services to people with disabilities
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing CHEO goods and services
- CHEO policies, practices and procedures relating to the customer service standard.

Staff will also be trained on an ongoing basis when changes are made to these policies, practices and procedures.

## 5. CROSS-REFERENCES:

CHEO Concerns and Compliments Policy No. 189.  
CHEO Cultural Interpretation Policy No.28.  
Use of Wireless Communication Devices Policy No. 041  
Acceptable Use of Information Systems, Policy No.153  
Telephone Practice Policy No. 039  
Media Relations Policy, No. 009  
CHEO Emergency Preparedness Binder  
Use of Service Animals Policy No. (219)

## 6. REFERENCES

Customer Service Guide  
<https://www.aoda.ca/customer-care-guide/>  
ONTARIO REGULATION 429/07 made under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.  
<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/070429>  
Compliance Manual: Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07. Available in Accessibility Committee shared drive or ([Compliance Manual](#)) <https://carleton.ca/accessibility/sources-and-resources/>

## 7. DEFINITIONS:

“Customers” include,  
    patient, family and visitors  
“Disability” means,  
    (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*;

## Appendix A – Sample Document for Notifying the Public Regarding Disruptions in Service



### **Elevators out of service!**

**The (West Wing elevators) will be out of service from (date to date) for routine maintenance.**

**Please use the elevators near the coffee shop.**

**We apologize for any inconvenience. If you have any questions or concerns please call (number)**

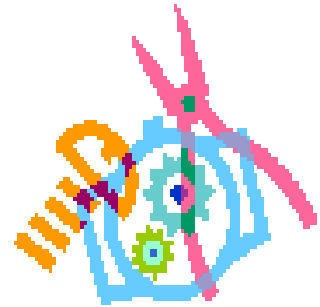
**Thank You,  
Building Services**

### **Date:**

### **Water leak!:**

**This (accessible washroom) is out of service due to a (broken pipe). A repair person will be on site tomorrow to repair it. Until then, please use the accessible washroom located (location). We apologize for any inconvenience.**

**If you have any questions or concerns please call (number)**



**Thank You,  
Building Services**