

	<b>Policy/Procedure Name:</b>	<b>Accessibility Standards for Customer and Patient Services</b>	
<b>Manual:</b>	Board of Directors	<b>Number:</b>	
<b>Section:</b>	Ensure Program Quality & Effectiveness	<b>Effective Date:</b>	11 MAR 2010
<b>Pages:</b>	1 of 4	<b>Revision Date:</b>	13 MAY 2021

### **1. Our Mission**

Working together to provide outstanding integrated health care to our communities, delivering best patient outcomes with exemplary standards and compassion.

### **2. Our Commitment**

In fulfilling our mission, MAHC strives at all times to provide its care and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. We are also committed to giving people with disabilities the same opportunity to access our services and allowing them to benefit from the same services, in the same place and in a similar way as other people.

### **3. Providing goods and service to people with disabilities**

Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare is committed to excellence in serving all customers including people with disabilities and we will carry out our functions and responsibilities in the following areas:

#### **3.1 Communication**

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

We will train staff who communicate with customers on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.

#### **3.2 Telephone Services**

We are committed to providing fully accessible telephone service to our customers. We will train staff to communicate with customers over the telephone in clear and plain language and to speak clearly and slowly.

We will offer to communicate with customers by e-mail or TTY if telephone communication is not suitable to their communication needs or is not available.

#### **3.3 Assistive devices**

We are committed to serving people with disabilities who use assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from our services. We will ensure that our staff are trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by customers with disabilities while accessing our services.

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We will also ensure that staff know how to use the following assistive devices available on our premises for customers

- Wheelchair
- Crutch
- Cane
- Photocopier (Large Print Documents)
- American Sign Language (ASL) Interpretation Technology

### **3.4 Billing**

We are committed to providing accessible invoices to all of our customers. For this reason, invoices will be provided in the following formats upon request and required:

- Hard Copy
- Large Print
- Electronic copy

We will answer any questions customers may have about the content of the invoice in person, by telephone or e-mail.

### **4. Use of service animals and support persons**

See Service Animal Policy # 42  
 See Support Person Policy # 41

### **5. Notice of temporary disruption**

Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare will provide people with notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services usually used by people with disabilities. This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

The notice will be placed at all public entrances and service counters on our premises.

### **6. Training for staff**

Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare 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 and patient services policies, practices and procedures.

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For all new hires this training will be provided at Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare’s General Orientation Day, but no later than two (2) months after date of hire.

*Training will include the following:*

- The purpose 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 use the assistive devices
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare’s services
- Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare’s policies, practices and procedures relating to the customer service standard

Applicable staff will be trained on policies, practices and procedures that affect the way services are provided to people with disabilities. Staff will also be trained on an ongoing basis when changes are made to these policies, practices and procedures.

### **7. Feedback process**

The ultimate goal of Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare is to meet and surpass customer expectations while serving customers with disabilities. Comments on our services regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcome and appreciated.

Feedback regarding the way Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare provides goods and services to people with disabilities can be made by e-mail, Opportunities for Improvement Suggestion Box, or using the online form found on our MAHC Website’s Accessibility Page. All feedback will be directed to the most responsible person for the department or area. Customers can expect to hear back in seven (7) days.

Complaints will be addressed according to the complaint categories already established in MAHC’s complaint management process.

### **8. Modifications to this or other policies**

We are committed to developing customer and patient services 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. Any policy of MAHC that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be modified or removed.

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### **9. Questions about this policy**

This policy exists to achieve service excellence to customers with disabilities. If anyone has a question about the policy, or if the purpose of a policy is not understood, an explanation should be provided by, or referred to your Human Resources Department.

UNDER REVIEW

	<b>Policy/Procedure Name:</b>	<b>Service Animal</b>
<b>Manual:</b> Board of Directors	<b>Number:</b>	
<b>Section:</b> Ensure Program Quality & Effectiveness	<b>Effective Date:</b> 11 MAR 2010	
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**Policy:**

Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare is committed to providing safe and accessible healthcare to our communities. Should a person with a disability require the use of their service animal the hospital will endeavour to accommodate the patient and their service animal in the safest manner while adhering to infection prevention and control, health and safety policies, and any other regulation or law as amended from time to time.

**Procedure:**

1. To be considered a service animal under the Blind Persons Rights Act, it must be either readily apparent that the animal is being used because of a person’s disability or the person with a disability must provide a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that it is required because of his or her disability.
2. Where an animal is not a trained guide dog and it is not readily apparent to an average, informed person that the animal is a service animal, you may ask the person using the service animal for a letter from a doctor or nurse that says the animal is needed because of a disability. The letter need only explain that the animal is required because of a disability. The letter does not need to identify the disability, why the animal is needed or how it is used.
3. Only service animals that accompany persons with visual, hearing and/or other disabilities will be allowed on hospital premises all other animals will be required to adhere to Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare’s “Visiting Pets in Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare Facilities” policy.
4. Service animals may accompany visitors with disabilities to all public areas in the hospital when:
  - a. the presence of such dog service animal in a particular area is not medically contraindicated;
  - b. the presence of such dog service animal does not conflict with or imperil infection control efforts.

**RESTRICTIONS**

- No animal will be permitted in the following areas:
- Surgical suites including operating and recovery rooms
- Intensive Care areas
- Labour and delivery areas
- Newborn nursery
- Food preparation areas
- Medication or clean/sterile supplies storage areas
- Emergency Department (except guide dogs)

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5. If a patient is required to enter an area where a service animal is not permitted due to regulation or law, hospital staff or volunteers will act as a service person so that the person with a disability is able to receive the care that they need.
6. Guide/Service dogs animals will be allowed to remain in hospital with a patient during hospitalization.

UNDER REVIEW

		<b>Policy/Procedure Name:</b>	<b>Support Person</b>
<b>Manual:</b>	Board of Directors	<b>Number:</b>	
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### **Definition**

A support person means, 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.

### **Policy**

We are 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 Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare’s premises with his or her support person.

### **Procedure**

1. If it is necessary that a patient have access to their support person for the purpose of communication staff will attempt to have the support person communicate or interpret with a patient prior to a procedure or exam taking place in order to protect the privacy of the patient.
2. If the attendance of a support person is required through the course of medical treatment for the purpose of communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or access to services there will be authorization received from both the patient and the attending physician.
3. The support person could be a paid personal support worker, a volunteer, a friend or family member. He or she does not necessarily need to have special training or qualifications.
4. If either the patient or physician do not agree to the use of a support person during the course of medical care, the physician and patient will work together to find an alternative way to communicate together.
5. Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare will not be responsible for compensating an individual’s support person unless agreed to in advance, or required by statute or other legislative requirements in the Province of Ontario.

<sup>1</sup>Guide to the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07