

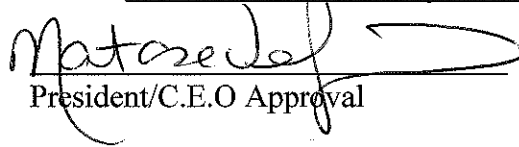
Woodstock General Hospital  
MANAGEMENT METHODS MANUAL

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Subject: Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)  
Customer Service Policy and Procedures

Approval:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
President/C.E.O Approval

Date: January 2010

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M.A.C. Approval (if required)

April 27, 2010

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Board of Trust Approval (if required)

Reviewed/Revised  
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**POLICY**

**1. PURPOSE/SCOPE**

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*

- a) The Woodstock General Hospital (WGH) 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.
- b) This policy establishes the accessibility standards for customer service for the WGH in accordance with the requirements of Ontario Regulation 429/07.

**2. POLICY APPLICATION**

These policies and procedures apply to all goods and services that are delivered by the Hospital by any means including in person, by telephone, electronically, by mail, visually, orally or by written means.

This policy applies to all persons for whom the Woodstock General Hospital Board of Trust is responsible, including employees, persons with practicing privileges, volunteers and students.

### 3. DEFINITIONS

The AODA and Ontario Regulation 429/07 contain and refer to various definitions that are relevant to this policy, some of which are set out below.

- a) **assistive device** means,
  - any device that is designed, made or adapted to assist a person to perform a particular task and may include, but is not limited to, wheelchairs, reading machines, recording machines, hearing devices and devices for grasping.
  
- b) **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”).
  
- c) **disability** means,
  - i) 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,
  - ii) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
  - iii) a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
  - iv) a mental disorder, or
  - v) 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”)
  
- d) **guide dog** means
  - 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))

- e) **service animal** means an animal acting as a service animal for a person with a disability,
  - i) if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or
  - ii) if the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability
- f) **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

#### **4. POLICY PRINCIPLES**

The Hospital shall meet its duties and responsibilities under Ontario Regulation 429/07 by adhering to the following principles and practices:

##### **I. Training**

Training is required for all persons for whom the Woodstock General Hospital Board of Trust is responsible, including employees, persons with practicing privileges, volunteers and students, or who are involved in developing policies, practices and procedures. The required training must include information on how to communicate and interact with people with disabilities, how to interact with people who have an assistive device, service animal or support person, how to utilize assisted devices that are available on Hospital premises, and what to do if a person has difficulty accessing the Woodstock General Hospital Services.

The training will include the core principles of customer service as set out by the Woodstock General Hospital, which include: dignity, equity, inclusion, independence, integration, sensitivity and equality.

A training program will be implemented which will ensure compliance and meet the needs of various departments and employee groups. Records are to be kept indicating the date and training provided, and the number of individuals to whom it was provided.

Third party organizations providing goods or services on behalf of the Hospital shall provide relevant training, learning opportunities or direction to employees and volunteers regarding their roles and responsibilities under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*.

## **II. Use of Assistive Devices:**

Woodstock General Hospital is committed to serving people with disabilities, who use assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from our services. Woodstock General Hospital will ensure that staff are trained on or about the assistive devices that may be made available at the Hospital and realize that persons with disabilities may use their own assistive devices to access the Hospital's services. For example, if Woodstock General Hospital provides a wheelchair for use by persons accessing our services, the staff providing the wheelchair will be trained on how to set up and use the wheelchair.

## **III. Service Animals and Support Persons**

A person with a disability accompanied by a service animal is permitted to enter the Woodstock General Hospital premises unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law or Hospital policy surrounding Infection Prevention and Control, Health and Safety or hygiene concerns. Should a service animal be excluded from the premises then the hospital shall ensure that other measures are available to enable the person with the disability to obtain, use or benefit from the goods and/or services provided.

People accompanied by service animals are responsible for the care and supervision of their service animals. Woodstock General Hospital will not accept responsibility for service animals' care while the animal is on the premises. It is the owner's responsibility to make arrangements for their animals' care.

Section 4(9) of the Accessibility Standards on Customer Service indicates that an animal is a service animal if (1) it is readily apparent that the animal is being used for reasons related to a person's disability; or (2) if the person provides a letter from the doctor or nurse confirming that the animal is required for reasons relating to the disability.

Staff will be properly trained to identify support persons who may be a paid professional, volunteer, family member or friend that may accompany a customer in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods and services.

A disabled person's support person is to be permitted access to all hospital facilities. Some restrictions may apply where the service delivered would pose a threat to the well-being of others or the support person (for example, radiological procedures or the operating theatres). The Hospital will make an accommodation in these types of cases.

In the event that a fee is charged in relation to a support person's presence on Woodstock General Hospital 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, Woodstock

General Hospital may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person with on Woodstock General Hospital premises for the purpose of protecting the health and safety of the person with the disability or others on the premises.

#### **IV. Notice of Temporary Disruptions**

The Woodstock General Hospital will give notice of temporary disruptions to service or facilities used by persons with disabilities including the reason(s) for the disruption, anticipated length of disruption and a description of any available alternative facilities, services or resources. The notice shall be posted at the facility and on the hospital web site as required. When the disruption is planned, advance notice will be provided.

#### **V. Feedback**

Notices in customer service areas will notify customers that their feedback is welcomed and valued for the continual improvement of services so as to avoid inadvertently excluding people with disabilities from activities or services.

An accessible simple to use system of providing feedback and complaints will be made available through a range of formats. Staff will make note of feedback given in person, verbally or in writing, online, by telephone, TTY or any other means. Staff can accomplish this by entering the information into the SERS system, which documents follow up action taken by appropriate departmental supervisors.

#### **VI. Availability of the Accessible Customer Service Documents**

a) The Woodstock General Hospital 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 Hospital shall notify persons to whom it provides goods and services that the documents required under Ontario Regulation 429/07 are available upon request.

b) The Woodstock General Hospital 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.

#### **VII. Communicating with People with Disabilities**

Woodstock General Hospital supports an accessible Ontario where the independence and integration for those with disabilities is promoted. When communicating with a person with a disability, the Woodstock General Hospital will do so in a manner that takes into

account the persons disability and will make reasonable effort to have the person with a disability understand both the content and intent of its communications.

#### **5. RESPONSIBLE EXECUTIVE**

The VP *of Support Services* shall appoint and direct the activities of the Accessibility Working Group. Senior management team shall review the policy and procedure annually.

#### **6. MODIFICATIONS TO THIS OR OTHER POLICIES**

The Woodstock General Hospital 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. The Woodstock General Hospital 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.