ACCESSIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS PROCEDURE

Printed copies are for reference only. Please refer to the electronic copy for the latest version.

See also: Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy Integrated Accessibility Standards Procedure

Procedure:

This procedure is intended to meet the requirements of the Customer Service Standards included in the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation 191/11 under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. It applies to the provision of goods, services or facilities to the public or other third parties, not to the goods themselves.

All goods, services and facilities provided by the South East Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) shall follow the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equality of opportunity for people with disabilities.

Establishment of policies

The South East LHIN shall make reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies, procedures and practices pertaining to the provision of goods, services or facilities to persons with disabilities follow guiding principles as set out in IASR 191/11.

1.0 The goods, services or facilities must be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.

2.0 The provision of goods, services or facilities 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, services or facilities.

3.0 Persons with disabilities must be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from the goods, services or facilities.

4.0 When communicating with a person with a disability, the provider shall do so in a manner that takes into account the person's disability.

Communications

When communicating with a person with a disability, South East LHIN staff 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.

Use of assistive devices

Persons with disabilities may use their personal assistive devices when accessing goods, services or facilities provided by the South East LHIN.

In cases where the assistive device presents a safety concern or where accessibility might be an issue, other reasonable measures will be used to ensure the access of goods, services or facilities. For example, where elevators are not present and where an individual requires assistive devices for the purposes of mobility, service will be provided in a location that meets the needs of the customer.

Use of service animals:

The South East LHIN is committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal on the parts of our premises that are open to the public.

A Service Animal, as defined by the AODA, includes guide dogs and any other animal that may be required by a person with any disability. The animal should be readily identified as one that is being used by the person for reasons relating to the person's disability, as a result of visual indicators such as a vest or harness. If the animal is not easily identifiable staff may ask a person to provide documentation from a regulated health professional that confirms the person needs the service animal for reasons relating to their disability.

If the service animal is excluded by law from South East LHIN premises the South East LHIN shall ensure that measures are available to permit persons with disabilities to obtain, use or benefit from South East LHIN goods, services or facilities through other means.

Use of support persons:

The South East 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 South East 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 South East LHIN premises or receiving South East LHIN services. 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 South East LHIN may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person while on South East LHIN premises or receiving South East LHIN services. This will be requested only after consulting with the person with a disability and considering the available evidence, the provider determines that,

(a) A support person is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health or safety of others on the premises; and
(b) There is no other reasonable way to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability and the health or safety of others on the premises.

If a support person is required, the South East LHIN will waive any applicable fees if ever a fee were to be charged.

Notice of temporary disruptions in services and or facilities:

In order to obtain, use or benefit from South East LHIN services, persons with disabilities usually use particular facilities or services of the South East LHIN. In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities for customers with disabilities, South East LHIN will notify the public.

If the South East LHIN staff become aware of a disruption that has not been addressed, they will call the Service Desk who will determine the most appropriate department or individual to action the disruption.

The notice of the 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.

The South East LHIN identifies the following facilities and services as being subject to the requirement for notification of temporary disruptions:

- Accessible parking
- Accessible washrooms
- Power door openers to public entrances
- Public Elevators

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

Training:

The South East LHIN will ensure training is provided to all employees, volunteers, students and to people who provide goods, services or facilities on our behalf in accordance with the applicable legislation.

Training will include the following topics:

- Purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the customer service standard.
- South East LHIN's policies, practices and procedures relating 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 equipment or devices available on the provider's premises or otherwise provided by the provider that may help with the provision of goods, services or facilities to a person with a disability.
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing South East LHIN goods, services or facilities.

New employees will be trained during orientation which typically occurs within the first month of hire. Staff will be trained when changes are made to the customer service policies.

Records of the training will be maintained by Human Resources and include the dates on which training is provided and the number of individuals to whom it is provided.

Feedback process:

Feedback about the delivery of goods, services or facilities to people with disabilities is welcomed as it encourages continuous service improvements. Feedback may be given in person, by telephone or by email. Visit our Contact Us webpage to determine the best method for you to provide feedback.

If feedback is received, Communications will forward to the Manager of Organizational Development. The Manager of Organizational Development will forward any recommendations to the Director, Human Resources and Organizational Development Strategies. Customers can expect to hear back within 15 business days.

The South East LHIN will ensure the feedback process is accessible to people with disabilities by providing or arranging for accessible formats and communication supports, on request.

Availability of the accessible customer service documents:

The South East LHIN shall prepare any additional documents describing its policies, practices and procedures as may be required by Ontario Regulation 191/11 and, upon request, shall give a copy of such documents to any person. Further, the South East LHIN shall notify persons to whom it provides goods, services or facilities that the documents required under Ontario Regulation 191/11 are available upon request. Notification will be given by posting the information in a conspicuous place operated by the South East LHIN and on the South East LHIN website.

The South East LHIN shall consult with the person making the request and give the person the documents, or the information contained in the documents described above, in an accessible format that takes into account the person's disability. This will be done in a timely manner and at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons.