



### Accessibility - Utilization of Assisted Devices

#### **POLICY**

The Espanola Regional Hospital and Health Centre (ERHHC) recognizes the requirements set out in the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, (Ontario Regulation, 429/07) of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005, as it pertains to the rights of a disabled person to utilize Assistive Devices while accessing services at our hospital site.

#### **PROCEDURE**

ERHHC shall make reasonable efforts to accommodate persons with disabilities in accordance with the following principles:

- a) dignity
- b) independence
- c) integration, except when alternate measures are necessary to meet the needs of people with disabilities, and
- d) equal opportunity. (s.3 (2), Ontario Regulation 429/07).

It is recognized that the utilization of Assistive Devices can greatly enhance the accessibility and independence of persons with disabilities.

#### **Accommodating Clients with Disabilities Through the Use of Assistive Devices**

In most situations, it is desirable for the disabled person to initiate a request for accommodation including the need for an Assistive Device. Staff of ERHHC will be pleased to work with the disabled patient to provide a suitable form of assistance, as available.

Where staff is aware of a person's need for assistance in accessing goods and services, staff will inform persons with disabilities of the accommodations and/or the assistive devices that ERHHC makes available to persons with disabilities.

In addition, it is recognized that some persons with disabilities will bring their own personal Assistive Devices to ERHHC, while accessing care services. ERHHC will make all reasonable attempts to accommodate the use of these devices and will only exclude devices based on reasonable grounds of health and safety needs (for example, during some X-ray procedures) – see below.

Accommodation often involves simple or informal forms of assistance that staff can provide quickly and easily. For example, staff may offer to fill out a form for a person who finds it difficult to grip a pen.

In some instances, more formal accommodation may be requested. Formal accommodation, such as a sign language interpreter, may require pre-planning. Some requests for accommodation will be uncertain and require assessment to determine the best accommodation to allow the client or customer to access services. Such accommodation may require pre-planning by staff and management and/or the approval of expenses.

### **Management Responsibilities**

Managers or their delegates will:

- a) either approve, deny, research and/or approve the accommodation request
- b) ensure the accommodation has been arranged for the client
- c) make certain the customer is kept informed of the status of their request in a timely manner

### **The Use of Assistive Devices by Persons with Disabilities**

Persons who require the use of an assistive device will be permitted to keep their device with them while accessing ERHHC's services unless the health and safety of the patient or others is at risk or where there is a risk of damage to any person or property.

Persons using assistive devices are expected to operate the device in a controlled manner at all times.

If the device is not permitted for use, ERHHC will make reasonable efforts to provide other means of accommodation, as appropriate to the individual situation.

### **Disagreements about the use of Assistive Devices and Accommodation Decisions**

In the event of a conflict concerning the use of an Assistive Device, ERHHC's policy concerning complaints (see Administration Complaint Procedure Policy) shall be utilized to provide for an escalating communication process.

### **Storing and Releasing Accommodation Records**

Accommodation records containing information about a particular client or other customer will be subject to the confidentiality restrictions of the Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA).

### **Agents/Others Providing Goods and Services on Behalf of ERHHC**

Agents and others providing goods and services on behalf of ERHHC will adhere to these practices

### **REFERENCES:**

- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)
- Ontario Regulation 429/07 - Accessibility Standards For Customer Service  
Ministry of Community and Social Services. (2009, April). *Guide to the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07*