



Corporate Policy

Accessibility

Policy Purpose:

The Ottawa Hospital (TOH) is committed to identifying, removing and preventing barriers that impede the ability of persons with Disabilities to fully access care and services. This includes everyone in the hospital's community, patients, families, Staff, physicians, and volunteers. TOH's Accessibility Policy complies with the *Accessibility for Ontarians With Disabilities Act, 2005, SO 2005, c 11* (AODA). It is intended to provide Staff and volunteers at all levels of duties with clear expectations in the delivery of care and services, employment and information to patients with Disabilities.

Scope: This policy applies to all TOH Staff in accordance with AODA legislation.

Definitions:

Accessible Formats: May include but are not limited to large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, Braille and other formats usable by persons with Disabilities.

Assistive Device: Any piece of equipment or device used to maintain or promote function in a person with a Disability. Assistive Devices can include, but are not limited to: walking sticks, crutches, wheelchairs, walkers, computerized communications devices.

Barrier: Anything that prevents a person with a Disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her Disability. Barriers can include a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice.

Disability:

- 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, a wheelchair, remedial appliance or device.
- a condition of mental impairment or a developmental Disability,
- a learning Disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
- a mental disorder, or
- an injury or Disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997, SO 1997, c 16, Sch A*.

Communication Supports: May include but are not limited to captioning, alternative and augmentative Communication Supports, plain language, sign language and other supports that facilitate effective communications.

Guide Dog: As defined in section 1 of the *Blind Persons' Rights Act*. A Guide Dog means a dog trained as a guide for a blind person and having the qualifications prescribed by the regulation.

Kiosk: An interactive electronic terminal, including a point-of-sale device, intended for public use that allows users to access one or more services or products or both.

Service Animal: An animal is a Service Animal for a person with a Disability:

- (a) if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her Disability; or
- (b) if the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the Disability.

Staff: All TOH employees, volunteers and any individual or organization that provides goods, services or facilities to the public or other third parties on behalf of TOH.

Support Person: 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 and services.

Policy Statement(s):

The Ottawa Hospital (TOH) is committed to giving persons with Disabilities the same opportunity to access its services and to benefit from the same services as other patients. This commitment extends to patients, families, visitors, employees and volunteers with visible or non-visible disabilities.

TOH shall have in place an Accessibility Committee for the purpose of monitoring the implementation of the AODA, preparing a TOH Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, providing updates related to sections of the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations (IASR)*, O. Reg. 191/11 (the Regulations) and other accessibility-related initiatives. The Committees' membership will consist of representatives from different departments of TOH and community organizations / individuals who represent persons with Disabilities.

TOH will comply with all these Regulations which apply to TOH as a designated public sector organization. These same Regulations were used to create TOH's Accessibility Policy.

TOH will continue to establish policies, practices and procedures on eliminating barriers and providing services and supports to persons with Disabilities. They will be consistent with the core principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity.

Documentation that describes this policy and each of its requirements shall be maintained on the TOH public website and provided to individuals upon request in the appropriate format or with communication support.

Accessible Services to Patients with Disabilities

Five-Year Accessibility Plan

TOH shall produce a multi-year Accessibility Plan in consultation with persons with Disabilities. The plan will be posted on the hospital's public website and shall be made available in an accessible format and with Communication Supports upon request. Progress on the plan will be provided on the schedule determined by the AODA 2005 legislation. The plan and subsequent progress reports will be approved by Senior Management and presented to the Board of Governors.

Communication

TOH will communicate with persons with a Disability, taking into account their preferences to receive and transmit information where possible. TOH will communicate with persons with a Disability, taking into account their preferences to receive and transmit information. The options of communication may include but are not limited to telephone, e-mails, TTY, message relay services and text messages where possible.

All documents containing either general or specific information such as a patient's file or invoices will be provided to the patient with Disabilities in an appropriate format. The options may include but are not limited to electronic files, hard copy, large font or Braille.

TOH employees, volunteers and third-party contractors shall use the proper terminology when speaking to or about persons with Disabilities, applying the person first rule.

TOH will have in place a feedback process that will be available to the public including persons with Disabilities. Information on this process will be posted on the public website or provided upon request.

Training

As per the Regulation, Section 7, TOH will provide all required accessibility-related training to all employees, volunteers and members of the Board of Governors prior to or upon the commencement of their duties at the hospital.

Assistance

- **Assistive Devices** – Persons with Disabilities may use their personal Disability when accessing TOH's goods, services or facilities. In cases where the assistive device presents a significant and unavoidable health or safety concern or may not be permitted for other reasons, other measures will be used to ensure the person with a Disability can access the hospital's goods, services or facilities.
- **Guide Dog and Service Animals** - Persons with Disabilities are permitted to be accompanied by their Guide Dog or Service Animal in those areas of TOH open to the public, unless such animal is excluded by another law or may cause any safety or health issues to Staff or patients.
- **Support Person** - Persons with a Disability who use a Support Person are entitled to bring that person with them while accessing services at TOH. 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 TOH premises.

Notice of Service Disruption

Notice will be provided, where possible, when facilities or services that persons with a Disability rely on are temporarily disrupted. Such notice 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 notice will be placed at all public entrances and service counters on TOH premises.

Accessible Website and Web Content

Internet websites and web content controlled directly by TOH or through a contractual relationship that allows for modification of the product shall conform to the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, at Level A and AA in accordance with the schedule set out in the *AODA Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations (IASR), O. Reg. 191/11*.

Employment Standards

TOH will comply with the *Employment Standards Act, 2000, SO 2000, c 41* and any applicable employment standards, and ensure that candidates with Disabilities have access to an accessible recruitment process. Once hired, employees with Disabilities will have access to various accommodation supports during their employment life cycle, including Documented Individual Accommodation Plans, Accessible Formats and Communication Supports, Workplace Emergency Response Information and Return to Work Processes.

Procurement

When procuring goods, services, self-service Kiosks or facilities, the hospital shall incorporate accessibility criteria and features, unless it is not feasible (practicable). If not practicable, the hospital shall provide an explanation, upon request.

Transportation Standards

TOH will provide accessible transportation services for employees between campuses. In the event that vehicles are not accessible, TOH will provide equivalent transportation services (i.e. in the form of accessible taxicabs.)

Responsibility and Monitoring

The Accessibility and Interpretation Services' (A-IS) office shall review this Policy annually and recommend amendments to ensure on-going compliance with regulated accessibility standards and legislated obligations.

Related Documents:

- [Pet Visitation, Pet Therapy and Assistance Animals in Hospital](#)

Related Legislation or Regulatory Requirements:

- [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, S.O. 2005, c. 11](#), and its regulation:
 - [Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations \(IASR\), O. Reg. 191/11](#)
- [Blind Persons' Rights Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. B.7](#)
- [Employment Standards Act, 2000, SO 2000, c 41](#)
- [Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.19](#)
- [Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c. 32](#)
- [Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997, SO 1997, c 16, Sch A](#)