



ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

Document Type: Policy and Procedure

Document Number: 1-60-260

Scope of Document: Organization Wide

Review Date (s): 01/2012r, 04/2014r, 03/2017r, 10/2017r

Effective Date: 12/2017

A. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline practices and procedures in place at Joseph Brant Hospital (JBH) to help identify and remove barriers that impede a person's ability to access care and services.

In June 2005, the Ontario government passed the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)*. The purpose of this enhanced Act is to implement and enforce standards of accessibility for all Ontarians. Joseph Brant's Accessibility Policy is consistent with the AODA, 2005 and the Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11.

Joseph Brant Hospital is committed to quality patient care. We provide a wide range of inpatient, outpatient and outreach services efficiently and in partnership with others. In fulfilling our mission, we strive at all times to provide goods 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 goods and services and allow them to benefit from the same services, in the same place and in a similar way as all customers.

B. Policy Statement(s)

Joseph Brant Hospital is committed to preventing, identifying and removing barriers that impede the ability of people with disabilities to access care and services. This includes patients, families, staff, physicians, volunteers and members of Joseph Brant's community. Joseph Brant Hospital is committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner.

Document Facilitator: Director, Human Resources

Next Review Date: 10/2020

Electronic version is the most current. Print copies are only valid for the day they are printed.

C. Policy Content

DEFINITIONS

Accessibility

The term accessibility means giving people of all abilities opportunities to participate fully in everyday life. It is used to describe how widely a service, product, device, or environment is available to as many people as possible. Accessibility can be seen as the ability to access and benefit from a system, service, product or environment.

Assistive Devices

Assistive devices include specialized aids and devices that enable people with disabilities to carry out their everyday activities. These include, but are not limited to, wheelchairs, hearing aids, adaptive computer technologies, walkers, ventilators, crutches and personal sound amplification devices.

Barriers

Barriers are obstacles that limit access and prevent people with disabilities from fully participating in society. Most barriers are not intentional. Barriers usually arise because the needs of people with disabilities are not considered from the beginning.

Attitudinal Barriers

Attitudinal barriers may result in people with disabilities being treated differently than people without disabilities.

Informational and Communication Barriers

These arise when a person with a disability cannot easily receive and/or understand information that is available.

Technological Barriers

Technological barriers occur when technology or the way it is used does not meet the needs of people with disabilities.

Systematic Barriers

Systematic barriers refer to policies, practices and procedures that result in people with disabilities being treated differently than others or sometimes excluded altogether.

Physical and Architectural Barriers

These occur in the environment and prevent access for people with disabilities.

Disability

According to the Ontario Human Rights Code, a "Disability" is defined as:

- (a) 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,
- (b) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
- (c) a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
- (d) a mental disorder, or
- (e) an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

Service Animals

An animal is considered a service animal if it can 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 the vest or harness worn by the animal or the person provides documentation from a regulated health professionals confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability (*Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11*).

Support Person

A "Support Person" accompanies a person with a disability, in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods, services or facilities (*Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11*).

GUIDELINES

Joseph Brant Hospital 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:

Communications

We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. Consideration will be given to the way in which individuals express, receive and process information.

The hospital will provide accessible formats and communication supports upon request.

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 plain language, and to speak clearly and slowly. We will offer to communicate with customers by e.g. email, TTY, if telephone communication is not suitable to their communication needs or is not available.

Procurement

We will incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities, including self-serve kiosks. If it is not possible and practical to do so, we will provide an explanation upon request.

Self-service Kiosks

We will incorporate accessibility features/consider accessibility for people with disabilities when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks.

Employment

We will notify employees, potential hires and the public that accommodations can be made during recruitment and hiring. We will notify staff that support is available for those with disabilities. We will put in place a process to develop individual accommodation plans for employees. Where needed, we will also provide customized emergency information to help an employee with disability during an emergency.

Joseph Brant performance management, career development and redeployment process will take into account the accessibility needs of all employees.

Assistive Devices

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

The Hospital will make reasonable efforts to ensure that assistive devices can be used to access services.

Design of Public Spaces

Joseph Brant Hospital is committed to ensuring that any new construction or redevelopment of public spaces will meet the requirements of these standards.

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: hard copy, large print or e-mail. We are available to answer any questions customers may have about the content of the invoice in person, by telephone or email.

USE OF SERVICE ANIMALS AND SUPPORT PERSONS

Joseph Brant Hospital welcomes people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal on the parts of our premises that are open to the public and other third parties. We will ensure that all staff, volunteers and others are properly trained in how to interact with people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal.

We welcome 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 Joseph Brant Hospital'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 our premises. Fees will not be charged for service animals or support persons for admission to Joseph Brant Hospital's premises.

NOTICE OF TEMPORARY DISRUPTION

Joseph Brant Hospital will provide customers 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.

All notices will be placed at all public entrances and service counters on our premises, as well as on our internet site.

D. Procedural Steps

TRAINING OF STAFF

Joseph Brant Hospital is committed to training staff, volunteers and learners in Ontario's accessibility laws and aspects of the Ontario Human Rights Code that relate to persons with disabilities. Joseph Brant Hospital will provide training to all employees and volunteers as it relates to their specific roles.

Individuals in all positions will be trained. This training will be provided during orientation for all new hires.

Training will include the following:

- The purposes of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standard, Ontario Regulation 191/11

- 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 equipment or devices , e.g. TTY, wheelchair lifts, etc. available on Joseph Brant Hospital provider's premises or otherwise that may help with the provision of goods or services to people with disabilities
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing Joseph Brant Hospital's goods and services
- Joseph Brant Hospital's policies, practices and procedures relating to the customer service standard

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

FEEDBACK PROCESS

The ultimate goal of Joseph Brant Hospital is to meet and surpass customer expectations while serving customers with disabilities. Feedback is welcomed and appreciated.

It is important for us to know how we are doing. Hearing from our patients and family members helps us know when we're doing a good job and when we can do better. Everyone is encouraged to provide feedback through various channels, including but not limited to the following:

- in person
- by telephone 905-632-3737
- by mail addressed to "Patient Relations"
- by email to accessibility@josephbranthospital.ca

The hospital will provide accessible formats and communication supports upon request to ensure that feedback processes are accessible.

MODIFICATIONS

We are 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. Any policy of **JBH** that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be modified or removed.

QUESTIONS

This policy exists to achieve service excellence to people 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 Human Resources Department of Joseph Brant Hospital.

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF DOCUMENTS

Notice of the availability of documents will be provided on the JBH website, in the Hospital Manual and through other printed methods.

Accessibility Plan

INTRODUCTION

Joseph Brant Hospital strives to meet the needs of its employees and customers with disability and is working hard to remove and prevent barriers to accessibility.

Our organization is committed to fulfilling our requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. This accessibility plan outlines the steps Joseph Brant Hospital is taking to meet those requirements and to improve opportunities for people with disabilities.

PAST ACHIEVEMENTS TO REMOVE AND PREVENT BARRIERS

Customer Service

JBH Staff are educated on Accessibility of Ontario Act and Ontario's Customer Service Standard.

Joseph Brant Hospital has access to immediate 24/7 over-the-phone interpretation with Access Alliance Language Services which has a complement of over 4,000 interpreters representing more than 170 spoken languages.

JBH has implemented a process for hearing impaired patients. If the patient is hearing impaired and an American Sign Language Interpreter is required Interpreting Services can be pre-booked for scheduled meetings and appointments with the following in mind:

- Bookings must be requested a minimum of 3 business days in advance
- Requests can be made Monday to Thursday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Fridays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Interpreters are available during business hours, evenings, weekends and over holidays
- Services are available on-site or by video remote interpreting
- Anyone can request the service
- Contact Ontario Interpreting Services, Central Booking:
 - Phone: 1-855-656-3748
 - TTY: 1-877-843-0368
 - Skype: callois.chs
 - E-mail: requests@oischs.ca
 - Fax: 1-855-656-3750

In cases of a sudden, unforeseen crisis that requires immediate American Sign Language Interpreter JBH has Emergency Interpreting Services that are offered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Please note Emergency Interpreting Services may not be available at all times in all regions, this service can be contacted:

- Phone 1- 866-256-5142
- TTY: 1-866-831-4657
- SMS/Text: 905-971-0564
- Email: ois@answerplus.ca

Information and Communications

The JBH website meets internationally-recognized Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA in accordance with Ontario's accessibility laws.

Employment

We made recruitment process accessible. All applicants are informed of the rights to request accommodation during the recruitment and onboarding process.

We have published an accessibility statement on our Careers Page, visible to all potential applicants.

Procurement

We have implemented a process of acquiring goods that is reflective of Accessibility Standards.

Self-Service Kiosks

We have made all parking payment kiosks accessible.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

Customer Service

Joseph Brant Hospital is committed to providing accessible customer service to people with disabilities. This means that we will provide goods and services to people with disabilities with the same high quality and timeliness as others.

We have committed to streamlining the feedback process for customers with accessibility request and decreasing response time. We have dedicated a specific email address accessibility@josephbranthospital.ca which will be monitored 24-hours a day.

Information and Communications

Joseph Brant Hospital is committed to making our information and communications accessible to people with disabilities.

We are committed to translating the accessibility statement into the top 5 languages native to Burlington's residents and making them available on the Internet.

We have committed to relocating our Accessibility Internet page to a highly visible location that includes our Customer Service Policy.

Self-Service Kiosks

Joseph Brant Hospital is committed to incorporating accessibility features/considering accessibility for people with disabilities when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks.

We have committed on publishing accessibility statement as part of our wayfinding kiosks information.

Related Documents

RELATED POLICIES

6-262 POL Accessibility: Use of Service Animals

References

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005
Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11