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Our Mission

“As a strong and progressive community hospital, we commit to providing high-quality and compassionate care in a sustainable manner.”

Our Vision

“A trusted community hospital providing exemplary care to you and those you love.”

Definitions:

Accessibility is:

- a) The extent to which a consumer or user can obtain a good or service at the time it is needed.
- b) The ease of which a facility or location can be reached from other locations.
- c) The ease of contact with a person or organization.
- d) Authorization, opportunity, or right to access records or retrieve information from an archive, computer system or website.

Disability is:


- a) Any degree of physical infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limit the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical coordination, blindness or physical impairment, 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) 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.
- e) An injury for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act 1997*.

POLICY:

1. Our commitment

In fulfilling our mission and vision, Erie Shores HealthCare (ESHC) strives at all times to provide its goods and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. We are committed to giving people with disabilities the same opportunity to access our goods and services and allowing them to benefit from the same services including employment opportunities, in the same place and in a similar way as other customers.

ESHC will not discriminate on the basis of disability in admission or access to, or treatment of, or employment in, its services, programs and activities.

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2. Providing goods and services to people with disabilities

Erie Shores HealthCare 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:

2.1 Communication

We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability.

We will train staff who communicate with clients on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.

2.2 Telephone services

We are committed to providing fully accessible telephone service to our clients. We will train staff to communicate with clients over the telephone in clear and plain language and to speak clearly and slowly.

We will offer to communicate with clients by other means of communication that apply, e.g. e-mail, TTY, relay services if telephone communication is not suitable to their communication needs or is not available.

2.3 Assistive devices

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

We will also ensure that staff know how to use the following assistive devices available on our premises for clients such as wheelchairs, walkers, canes, oxygen tanks, patient lifts etc.

2.4 Information

We are committed to providing accessible ‘information’ to all of our clients. For this reason, printed information sheets or booklets, invoices etc. will be provided in the following formats upon request: hard copy, large print, e-mail, electronic, or verbally communicated.


We will answer any questions clients may have about the content of the documents in person, by telephone or e-mail.

Emergency procedures, plans or public safety information will be made available in an accessible format with appropriate communication supports upon request.

3. Use of service animals and support persons

We are 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 and other third parties. We will also ensure that all staff, volunteers and others dealing with the public are properly trained in how to interact with people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal.

We are 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

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enter the 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.

4. Notice of temporary disruption

Erie Shores HealthCare will provide clients 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.

The notice will be placed at all public entrances and service counters on our premises.

5. Training for staff

Erie Shores HealthCare will provide training to all employees, volunteers and others who deal with the public or other third parties on their behalf, and all those who are involved in the development and approvals of customer service policies, practices and procedures. Individuals in the following positions will be trained: All managers and staff members, volunteers and contracted service personnel who deal directly with the public. This training has been provided to all staff (prior to January 2010) and subsequently to all new hires upon orientation, and periodically thereafter as required to individuals or groups of staff if indicated by feedback from disabled persons or as policies and/or procedures change.

Training will include the following:


- The purposes of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of 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 the assistive devices available on 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 Erie Shores HealthCare goods and services
- Erie Shores HealthCare policies, practices and procedures relating to the customer service standard.

6. Feedback process

The ultimate goal of Erie Shores HealthCare is to meet and surpass customer expectations while serving customers with disabilities. Comments on our services regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcome and appreciated.

Feedback regarding the way Erie Shores HealthCare provides goods and services to people with disabilities can be made by e-mail, letter, verbally, suggestion box, feedback card, etc. All feedback will be directed to the Patient Advocate. Clients can expect to hear back in 10 days.

Complaints will be addressed according to complaint categories already established in our company's complaint management procedures.

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7. Employment

ESHC will inform applicants that accommodations will be provided for those with disabilities, including accommodation related to materials or processes used during recruitment upon request.

All successful applicants and employees must be notified of accommodation policies as soon as practicable after they begin employment and receive updated information whenever the policies are changed.

For all information generally available to employees and needed for an employee's job, ESHC will provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports at the request of an employee with disability.

Where required, and if the employer is aware of the disability, ESHC will provide individualized workplace emergency response information to employees with a disability based on the nature of the disability. These documented individualized emergency response plans will be reviewed by Human Resources:

- when the employee moves to a different location in the organization
- when the employee's overall accommodations needs or plans are reviewed
- when the employer reviews its general emergency response policies

Individual accommodation plans will be documented and include:

- information regarding accessible formats and communication supports provided, if requested
- individualized workplace emergency response information, if required
- any other accommodation to be provided
- elements involved in the process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans included in the Regulation.


A return to work process will be in place and documented for employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and require accommodations in order to return to work.

In respect of employees with disabilities, ESHC will take into account accessibility needs and individual accommodation plans during career development and advancement, redeployment, and performance management processes.

8. Modifications to this or other policies

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 Erie Shores HealthCare that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be modified or removed.

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9. Questions about this policy

This policy exists to achieve service excellence to customers with disabilities. If anyone has a question about the policy, or if the purpose of a policy is not understood, an explanation will be provided by, or referred to the office of the VP Corporate Services.

References

Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Ontario Regulation 429/07
Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005 (AODA)
Integrated Accessibility Standards Ont. Reg 191/11 (June 3 2011)

APPROVAL PROCESS

Care Team and/or Committee:
Accessibility Committee
Senior Management Team

Date:
August 21, 2012
September 9, 2022