



ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY TEAM

Policy Title:	Accessibility Supports for Persons with Disabilities	
Policy Owner:	Accessibility Advisory Team	
Approval By:	CEO	
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Key Words: Accessibility, disability, equal access, Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005, (AODA), translation, interpreter, language, interpret, translator, deaf, Canadian Hearing Society, sign language, language and sensory barriers, developmental disability, physical barriers, handicap, accommodation, service animals, integrated standard, assistive devices, interpreter phone, LSA		

POLICY STATEMENT

St. Thomas Elgin General Hospital (STEGH) is committed to supporting a culture that values promoting a positive and safe environment for the hospital community that is reflective of the hospital's organizational values. STEGH is committed to providing accessible customer service and integration to individuals with disabilities, consistent with the principles of understanding, acceptance, and inclusion.

Under the Accessibilities for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2005), STEGH continues to promote an accessible environment for people with disabilities; monitored through the STEGH Accessibility Advisory Team. This policy sets out compliance with the Customer Services Regulation and the Integrated Accessibilities Standards, in accordance with Ontario Regulation 429/07 and Ontario Regulation 191/11. This policy applies to staff and affiliates of the organization.

DEFINITIONS

Accommodations: are measures used to make something accessible to an individual with a disability. Provision of assistive devices or services, changes to policies, programs or procedures, allowing a person with a disability to participate, even though they may participate differently, are some examples of accommodations.

Adaptive or Assistive Devices: includes tools such as computers or special communication devices that facilitate access to information or services for people with disabilities, as well as devices/supports such as mobility aids, service animals, etc.

Disability:

- a) any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness,
- b) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
- c) a learning disability or a dysfunction of 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 *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*.

Equality: means not only treating people the same way but also may mean treating people differently in order to ensure that they have access to information and services equal to persons without disabilities.

Support Persons: are used by people with many different kinds of disabilities. Some people rely on support persons for certain services or assistance, such as using the washroom or facilitating communication.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Executive Team:

- Review of existing policies and Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005 (AODA)
- Ensure STEGH practices are consistent with the core principles of independence, dignity, Integration and equality of opportunity

Managers:

- Implements, monitors and evaluates compliance of Accessibility Standards
- Receive requests for accommodation from persons with disabilities
- Determine, in consultation with the patient//hospital team member, the most appropriate accommodations
- Ensure staff know accessibility standards and are aware of procedure for back up accommodation or to notify patients/clients/staff should accessibility be temporarily out of service (i.e.) elevator down.

Human Resources services:

- Identify training needs, related to accessibility, and ensures all records of training/ attendance sheets are in Human Resources for record keeping
- Review policies and procedures related to Accessibility Standards
- Ensure HR practices are consistent with Accessibility Standards

Accessibility Advisory Team:

- Report, as required by legislation, the implementation of Accessibility Standards to the Ontario government
- Update the annual accessibility plan

Physicians, Employees, Affiliates:

- Participate in required education related to the Accessibility Standards
- Forward feedback from patients/customers regarding the Accessibility Standards to the manager of the appropriate area

Patients/Clients/Hospital Team Members:

- self-identify if there is a disability for which they require assistance in accessing STEGH services and communicate such to the appropriate STEGH personnel

PROCEDURE

1.0 Service Animals

- 1.1 Service animals can play an important and necessary role in fostering the independence of some people with disabilities and enable them to access supports.

- 1.2 A trained service animal, under the control of the person with a disability, will be welcomed by STEGH and its staff.
- 1.3 Service animals are often recognizable as they are wearing a harness or a service vest that alerts the public to the fact that they are working.
- 1.4 Any animal posing a direct threat to the health and safety of others, or exhibiting repeated disruptive behaviour, may be denied access to STEGH. In this case, staff will ensure other measures are available to enable the person with a disability to obtain services.
- 1.5 This is not to be confused with pet therapy or pet visitations for in-patients. Speak to the manager of the clinical area.
- 1.6 In accordance with the Health Protection and Promotion Act, service animals are not permitted in:
 - o food preparation and public food service areas
 - o medication storage / preparation areas
- 1.7 Infection Control will assess the risk for patient care and decide if service animals will be permitted in:
 - o Isolation rooms
 - o Intensive Care Unit
 - o Procedure areas (operating rooms, labour/delivery, pre-/post op recovery)
 - o In a room with an immunosuppressed patient
- 1.8 If any person sustains an injury from a service animal, a safety report must be completed using the event reporting system. All bites must be reported to Southwestern Public Health.

2.0 Use of Assistive Devices and Support Persons

- 2.1 STEGH will make every effort to ensure persons with disabilities can use their assistive devices when accessing care and services.
- 2.2 STEGH will permit persons with disabilities to be accompanied by support persons on STEGH premises, except where this is a safety concern
- 2.3 Accessibility services and accommodations can be found on Appendix A.

3.0 Notice of Temporary Disruptions

- 3.1 In the event services are temporarily unavailable, or anticipated to be, STEGH will provide public notice.
- 3.2 'Notice – Disruption in Service' Appendix B

4.0 Training for Accessibility

- 4.1 As part of corporate orientation, training will be provided to every staff or affiliate related to accessibility and human rights
- 4.2 A record of training including names and dates will be maintained.

5.0 Feedback

- 5.1 Opportunity for feedback and to respond to it is established through email, telephone, event management system, or in person.

6.0 Accessibility Plan

- 6.1 In compliance with the Integrated Accessibility Standards, the Accessibility Advisory Team will consult with stakeholders and produce a multi-year plan that includes measures to identify and remove barriers to persons with disabilities includes a list of policies, programs, practices to be reviewed in upcoming years to identify barriers is updated and reviewed and posted annually on the external/internal website.

7.0 Notice of Availability of Documents

7.1 Provide public notice that the documents required by the Accessibility Standards are available upon request in accessible formats.

8.0 Reporting

8.1 Maintain policies and procedures to demonstrate compliance with the Accessibility standards.

8.2 Submit an annual accessibility report, including an accessibility plan as per the Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2001), to the executive team.

8.3 File an annual accessibility report with the Ontario Government.

9.0 Workplace Emergency Response Information

9.1 Provide emergency procedures and public safety information to members of the public in accessible formats, upon request.

9.2 Provide individualized emergency response information to employees who self-identify as having disabilities. Emergency evacuation plans for employees with disabilities will be shared with their manager, security and peer assistants if noted.

10.0 Transportation

10.1 Where applicable, STEGH will provide accessibility transportation services upon request.

11.0 Procuring or acquiring goods and services

11.1 STEGH incorporates accessibility criteria when procuring, acquiring, or designing goods and services.

12.0 Internet and Web Content

12.1 As of 2014, all NEW internet websites and web content conforms to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), 2.0, Level A (excluding live captioning and pre-recorded audio description).

13.0 Recruitment

13.1 Staff and public are notified about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities in recruitment process

13.2 Upon selection, applicants are notified that accommodations are available upon request

14.0 Accommodation

14.1 Staff are informed of policies to support employees with disabilities, including provision of job accommodation

14.2 Individual accommodation plans are created for employees with disabilities

14.3 Return to work plans are created for those who have been absent from work due to a disability

14.4 Accessibility needs and accommodation plans are taken into account when redeploying employees with disabilities.

15.0 Performance Management and Career Development

15.1 Accessibility needs of staff with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans, will be considered during performance management process and when providing career development and advancement to staff with disabilities.

16.0 Interpreter / Translation

- 16.1 Members of the public may use their own interpreter support service, which may include having a person accompany them or use interpreter/translation services provided by STEGH.
- 16.2 STEGH Multi-language support for patients and other support for patients and families can be found on Appendix D

REFERENCES

[Accessibility in Ontario](#)
[Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005](#)
[Accessibility Standards for Customer Service](#)

[Ontario Building Code](#)

[Recruitment & Selection Policy](#)
[Workplace Accommodation Policy](#)
[Code of Conduct Policy](#)

APPENDICES

[APPENDIX A - Accessibility services and supports available at STEGH](#)
[APPENDIX B – Notice – Disruption in Service](#)
[APPENDIX C - Guide for assisting people with disabilities and/or special needs](#)
[APPENDIX D - Multi-Language telephone support service](#)
[APPENDIX E - Additional supports for people with disabilities](#)

APPENDIX A

Accessibility services and supports available at STEGH

Printed Floor Plan & Signage

- Printed Floor Plan on each floor posted at elevator
- Signage being replaced to meet accessibility standards for clarity

Escorts

- Volunteers available to escort (Mon-Fri 0800-1600); phone 2167

Directory Signs

- Inside Main Entrance Doors (East), First Floor, and South Building

Accessible Entrances

- East entrance and South Building is accessible at ground level without curbing
- Equipped with automatic, sliding doors

Accessible Parking

- Designated spaces in lots for visitors, patients, and staff

Accessible Washrooms

- Accessible washroom marked with this symbol:



Accessible Elevators

- Accessible and equipped with audio tones and Braille

Handrails/bumpers

- In main hallways throughout hospital

Wheelchairs

- Available in Emergency, East Entrance and South Building

Care of the Bariatric Patient

- Bariatric beds, lifts, stretchers, commodes, wheelchairs
- See policies & procedures for care of the bariatric patient

Assistive Devices

- Members of the public are encouraged to use their own personal assistive devices to access services. This may include service animals.

Phones and Teletypewriter (TTY) Text Phone Devices

- Permanent TTY device at Switchboard location in Emergency Department.
- User phone # STEGH TTY Line (519) 631-7789

American Sign Language (ASL) Interpreters

- Available upon request – advanced notice is required
- Contact the Canadian Hearing Society, reference: Accessibility: Interpreter/Translation and Alternate Format Procedure

Language Translation Services

- Available through phone translation services – reference: Accessibility: Persons with Disabilities – Appendix D

APPENDIX B



Notice

Disruption in Service

There is currently an unexpected service disruption. The estimated time of the service disruption will be:

From: _____

To: _____

The disruption includes:

The following alternative services are available:

On the behalf of the St. Thomas Elgin General we would like to thank you for your patience in this matter.

Contact: _____

APPENDIX C**Guide for assisting people with disabilities and/or special needs**

- Always ask first if you can be of any assistance to them. “How may I help you?”
- To guide the person, offer them your arm instead of taking theirs and walk at their pace. Keep half a step ahead of them.
- Provide advance warning of upcoming stairs, curbs, major obstacles, or changes in direction.
- Watch for overhangs or protrusions the person could walk into.
- ✗ Never grab or touch a person with vision loss.
- ✗ Do not assume the person cannot see you, or that they need your help.
- ✗ Do not touch, make eye contact or distract the person’s service dog as this can seriously endanger the owner.
- ✗ Do not shout at a person with vision loss. Speak clearly and provide specific and precise directions.
- ✗ Avoid the terms like “over there”. Instead, describe locating positions such as, “to your right/left/ straight ahead/ behind you”, or by relaying clock face position (eg. 12 o’clock)
- For people who are deaf-blind, use your finger to draw an “X” on their back to let them know you are there to help during an emergency.
- To communicate with a deaf-blind person, try tracing letters with your finger on the palm of their hand.
- Ensure that the person’s wheelchair goes with the person.
- ✗ Do not push or pull a person’s wheelchair without their permission.
- Ensure you know what personal assistant devices are available at STEGH to assist those with disabilities.

APPENDIX D

Multi-Language telephone support service

Multi-Language Support for Patients and Families - LSA (Language Services Associates)

www.lsaweb.com

Phone: 1-800-305-9753, Option #2, STEGH Code #5518

- This service connect clinical staff with medically trained professionals that are able to translate over 200 languages
- Dedicated phones are located in all clinical areas. Service is accessible from any phone.
- This confidential services is offered at no charge to patients
- Units are charged; document its use in the patient chart and notify your manager



Two-handed unit



Cordless Unit

Language Exception: Low German

Mennonite Community Services of Southern Ontario

www.mcson.org

Phone: 519-765-3023

- The interpreter needs of the of Low German community are unique and cannot be provided by this service
- We encourage patients to bring their own resource for translation
- If this is not possible, contact Mennonite Community Services for support

APPENDIX E

Additional supports for people with disabilities

Across Languages Translation and Interpretation Service

www.acrosslanguages.org

129 & 131 Wellington Street. London, ON

Phone: 519.642.7247

Toll Free: 866.833.7247

- There may be occasion when external face-to-face translation is required
- As there is a fee, this requires approval of your manager.

Canadian Hearing Society

www.chs.ca

181 Wellington Street, London, ON N6B 2K9

Phone: 519-667-3325

- Provides information and services for alternative formats and communication for people who are culturally Deaf, oral deaf, deafened and hard of hearing
- American Sign Language ASL also offered
- Also LSQ (French)
- There will be a charge for this service incurred by STEGH; you must notify your manager

Vision Loss or partially sighted - CNIB

www.cnib.ca

749 Baseline Rd., London, ON N6C 2R6

Phone: 519-685-8420

- Community-based support, knowledge and a national voice to ensure Canadians who are blind or partially sighted:

Mental Health Care

www.cmha.ca

- Mental health is not only the avoidance of serious mental illness
- Your mental health is affected by numerous factors from your daily life, including the stress of balancing work with your health and relationships
- More and more Canadians take care of friends, family members, and loved ones of all ages living with a mental health problem, whether they live together at home or not
- Caring for a loved one can be rewarding, but it can also be tiring, overwhelming, confusing, and stressful