RLISS de Champlain LHIN Policy and Procedures	Section	2.1 WORKPLACE PRACTICES
	Title	Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities
	Number	CH HR 1-02
	Owner	Director, Human Resources

Change History

Version #	Issue Date	Description
4.0	23 May 2017	Policy revisions to address integration with the Champlain Community Care Access Centre (CCAC).
3.0	11 Oct 2016	Edits made to policy that reflect changes under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) which came into effect July 1, 2016. The Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, which was formerly its own regulation under the AODA, will now be incorporated as a section within the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation.
2.0	12 Dec 2012	Common Policies Board Approved
1.0	27 Oct 2010	Initial release of Board Approved Policy

1. PURPOSE

The Champlain LHIN is supportive of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and its objective of achieving accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises on or before January 1, 2025. As such, we are committed to identifying, removing and preventing barriers that patients, employees, and members of the public may face when interacting with the Champlain LHIN. This Policy documents the Champlain LHIN's commitment to achieving the requirements of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA).

This Policy establishes the LHIN's commitment to identifying, removing and preventing barriers that persons with disabilities may face when interacting with the Champlain LHIN, and spells out the methods by which the Champlain LHIN will achieve this objective.

2. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to employees, volunteers, students, Board appointees and other individuals working on behalf of the LHIN.

3. POLICY

Champlain LHIN (the LHIN) is committed to complying with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA).

- The LHIN respects and promotes the principles of independence, dignity, integration, and equal opportunity and will be guided by these principals in its accessibility practices.
- The LHIN has developed and will maintain a multi-year accessibility plan to identify, remove and prevent barriers to persons with disabilities and to ensure that its *AODA* obligations are met. The plan will be reviewed and updated no less than every five years.
- The LHIN will broadly communicate its commitment to accessibility. It's Accessibility Policy, multi-year work plan, and other related documents will be posted on the LHIN external web site and internal intranet site, and will also be provided in accessible format upon request.

No changes will be made to this Policy or other Policies before considering any potential negative impacts on persons with disabilities.

4. DEFINITIONS

A **barrier** is anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his/her disability. Barriers may be physical, architectural, informational, communicative, attitudinal, or technological in nature, as well as in the format of a policy, procedure, or practice.

A **disability** refers to 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 guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other 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*.

A **service animal** is an animal that serves as an aid for a person with a disability if;

- It is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or
- The person with a disability provides a certificate or letter from a training provider, the Attorney General of Ontario, a physician or nurse confirming he/she requires the animal for reasons relating to a disability.

A **support person** is an individual, who accompanies a person with a disability, in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs, or other access to goods or services. A support person may be a paid professional support worker, volunteer, family member, or friend.

5. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- Human Resources is responsible for implementing this Policy.
- Human Resources is responsible for receiving and following up on feedback from employees, volunteers or contracted individuals.
- Communications and Engagement is responsible for receiving and following up on feedback.

6. EXCEPTIONS

N/A

7. PROCEDURE

The LHIN will establish a multi-year accessibiltity plan in consultation with persons with disabilities, and an Accessibility Advisory Committee. This multi-year plan will specify the steps that the Champlain LHIN will take to identify, remove and prevent barriers, and the time lines for taking such steps.

The *AODA* requirements for identifying, removing and preventing barriers to persons with disabilities are phased in over several years. The LHIN will be proactive and will endeavour to meet its obligations ahead of legislated deadlines.

The Director, Human Resources will report annually on progress towards the plan to the senior management team.

Access to LHIN Goods and Services (Customer Service)

Persons with disabilities are welcomed and encouraged to access LHIN goods and services and will be given opportunity equal to that shown to others to obtain, use, and benefit from our goods and services.

The provision of LHIN goods and services to persons with disabilities will be integrated with the provision of goods or services to others, unless an alternate measure is necessary, whether temporary or on a permanent basis.

Patients with disabilities who are receiving ongoing service from the LHIN will have their accessibility needs documented in their client information record.

Communications

Communications with persons with disabilities will take into account their individual needs.

Assistive Devices

Persons with disabilities may use personal assistive devices, such as wheelchairs, canes, and walkers, to access LHIN goods and services.

The LHIN will endeavor to provide other assistive devices, such as TTY access and amplification systems, as required.

Records related to the use of assistive devices are considered the personal health information of patients and will be stored and treated in compliance with the *Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004* and other relevant legislation.

Service Animals

Persons with disabilities may enter LHIN premises with a service animal, unless the animal is excluded by law. Where a service animal is excluded by law, the LHIN will explore other measures, such as a support person, to facilitate access to its goods and services.

Persons using a service animal must keep the animal with them and under control at all times. Persons whose service animal displays aggressive behaviour, or poses a risk to the health and safety of others, will be required to remove the animal from LHIN premises.

If an employee is unable to provide service to a person using a service animal due to medical reasons, such as allergy, another employee will provide service.

Support Persons

Where persons with disabilities require a support person to access LHIN goods and services, both the person with a disability and the support person will have access to LHIN premises.

Support persons must observe the LHIN's policies and practices, and keep confidential any personal information that they become aware of in their supporting role.

It is expected that persons with disabilities will:

- Ensure that their support person is aware of the limits of confidentiality and privacy regarding any personal health information that is discussed;
- Agree that personal information required for the provision of goods and/or service may be shared and;
- Designate, in writing, the support person as a contact person with whom LHIN staff may communicate.

The LHIN will not charge a fee in relation to a support person's presence.

Should there be any concerns about the health and safety of persons with a disability or others on the premises, the LHIN reserves the right to require persons with disabilities to be accompanied by a support person.

Temporary Disruptions

Disruptions may occur that will impede access to services, facilities, or systems. Such disruptions can be of particular significance for persons with disabilities.

- When planned or unplanned disruptions occur, the LHIN will provide notice as soon as reasonably possible, either in advance or as the LHIN becomes aware of a disruption occurring.
- Notices will include the reason for and anticipated length of the disruption, a description of alternate services, facilities, or systems, as available.

- Notices will be clear, concise, and posted in an obvious manner and in consideration of the disabilities of persons who may require access.

Training

The LHIN will provide training on the *AODA* accessibility requirements, the Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities, and LHIN accessibility Policies and procedures to all employees, Board appointees, volunteers, and contracted individuals.

- Training will be appropriate to the role and duties of the individual.

In addition, where an employee, Board appointee, volunteer, or contracted individual interacts with the public or third parties on behalf of the LHIN, or is involved in the development and approval of Policies, practices, and procedures related to the provision of goods or services, training will include:

- effective ways to interact and communicate with people with disabilities,
- LHIN procedures around temporary service disruptions, and
- LHIN accessibility feedback processes.

The LHIN will require Service Provider Organizations to provide similar training to their employees that provide goods or services to LHIN patients, and will require written confirmation of the Service Provider Organization's compliance.

Training will be delivered:

- When changes are made to policies, procedures, and practices; and
- During orientation for new hires and appointees and employees returning to work from leave of absence.

Records of training will be kept including the date on which an individual's training was completed.

Information and Communications

Accessible Formats and Communications Supports

The LHIN is committed to ensuring that persons with disabilities, whether patients, employees, or members of the public, have access to information and documents produced by the LHIN.

Upon request, the LHIN will arrange for the timely provision of accessible formats and communications supports for persons with disabilities, taking into account the person's disability needs.

In determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support, the LHIN will consult with the person making the request.

Persons requesting accessible formats or communications supports shall not be charged any fee in excess of what would be normally charged to other persons.

The LHIN will broadly communicate the availability of accessible formats and communications supports.

Feedback

The LHIN will implement processes for patients, employees, and members of the public to provide feedback on matters related to accessibility.

Upon request, the LHIN will provide or arrange for accessible formats or communications supports, so that persons with disabilities are able to utilize feedback mechanisms.

Feedback on any situation where non-compliance with the Customer Service Standard of the *AODA* may have occurred will be recorded in the Champlain Event Learning System, and an investigation will be conducted.

Investigation findings and recommendations will be used to prevent a reoccurrence and to make improvements where indicated.

The LHIN will communicate the findings of the investigation and any resulting actions to the individual who provided feedback.

Accessible Web Sites and Web Content

The LHIN will ensure that any new web site, and content on that web site, conforms to WCAG 2.0 Level A.

By January 1, 2021, LHIN internet sites and content will conform with WCAG 2.0 level AA to the extent required by the *AODA.*

Procurement

The LHIN will incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities, except where it is not feasible to do so.

Employment

Recruitment, Assessment and Selection

The LHIN will notify its employees and members of the public that accommodation for applicants with disabilities is available to them throughout the recruitment processes. Such notification will be provided whenever vacancies are advertised, or whenever the LHIN is promoting the submission of applications, such as recruitment fairs.

Upon being invited to participate in the recruitment, assessment or selection processes, applicants will be advised that accommodation is available with respect to the materials or processes to be used. If an applicant requests accommodation, the LHIN will consult with him/her and will

provide suitable accommodation in a manner that takes into account the applicant's accessibility needs due to disability.

All offers of employment shall include a statement notifying the applicant of the LHIN's Policies for accommodating employees with disabilities.

Accommodation

The LHIN will ensure that all employees and Board appointees are notified of its Policies to support employees with disabilities, including Policies on job accommodation for employees with disabilities, and any updates or modifications to these Policies.

New employees will be notified of these Policies upon hire. New Board appointees will be notified of these Policies as part of their orientation to the LHIN.

If an employee with a disability requests, the LHIN will consult with the employee to arrange for the provision of suitable accessible formats and communications supports for information that the employee needs in order to perform his/her job, and information that is generally available to other employees.

Individualized Workplace Emergency Response Information

Where the LHIN is aware of an employee's need for accommodation due to disability, it will provide individualized workplace emergency response information to the employee, if the disability is such that individualized information is necessary.

An employee's individualized workplace emergency response information will be reviewed whenever the employee moves to a different location within the LHIN, when the employee's overall accommodation needs are reviewed, and when the LHIN's general emergency response policies are reviewed.

Subject to the employee's consent, if an employee who receives individualized workplace emergency response information requires assistance, the LHIN shall provide such workplace emergency response information to the person designated to provide assistance to the employee.

Individual Accommodation Plans

The LHIN will develop and maintain a written process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities. The process will include the following elements:

- The manner in which the employee requesting accommodation can participate in the development of an individual accommodation plan;
- The means by which the employee will be assessed on an individual basis;
- The manner in which the LHIN can request an evaluation by an outside medical or other expert to assist the LHIN in determining if accommodation can be achieved and, if so, how it can be achieved. Such evaluation shall be at the LHIN's expense;

- The manner in which the employee can request the participation of their bargaining agent, or if the employee does not have a bargaining agent, a representative from the workplace, in the development of the accommodation plan;
- The steps taken to protect the privacy of the employee's personal information;
- The frequency with which the individual accommodation plan will be reviewed and updated and the manner in which this will be done;
- The manner in which reasons for denial of an individual accommodation plan will be provided to an employee; and
- The means of providing the individual accommodation plan in a format that takes into account the employee's accessibility needs.

Individual accommodation plans will include, at a minimum;

- Any information regarding accessible formats and communications supports provided;
- Any individualized workplace emergency response information; and
- Any other accommodation that is to be provided.

The LHIN will have in place a documented return to work process for employees that have been absent from work due to disability and require disability-related accommodation in order to return to work.

The return to work process will outline the steps that the LHIN will take to facilitate the return to work of employees that were absent because their disability required them to be away from work, and will use documented individual accommodation plans as part of the process.

Performance Management, Career Development and Redeployment

The LHIN will take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities, as well as any individual accommodation plans, when;

- Using its performance management process,
- Providing career development and advancement to employees, and
- Redeploying employees with disabilities.

The Director, Human Resources will provide an annual report to the senior management team regarding the organization's AODA activities, including:

- Functioning of the AODA Committee;
- Complaints related to AODA and resolution thereof; and
- Progress to the multi-year plan.

8. REFERENCES:

Other Policies that are related

Recruitment and Selection Policy
Salary Administration Policy
Performance Management Policy
Early and Safe Return to Work Policy

Related legislation

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005
Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004
Ontario Human Rights Code, 1990

9. APPENDIX

N/A