

 <small>Extraordinary Caring. Every Person. Every Time.</small>		NAME: NH Accessibility Policy	
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1.0 Purpose

Niagara Health (NH) recognizes the diverse needs of the community and is committed to continually improving accessibility for persons with disabilities in NH employment as well as services provided to our community. NH will meet and provide all appropriate Customer Service Standards under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.

2.0 Scope

Applies to all staff and physicians within Niagara Health.

3.0 Policy

3.1 NH is committed to providing a safe and therapeutic environment for all patients, staff and visitors. NH personnel shall follow this policy and the procedures outlined herein to ensure that patient, substitute decision maker and family rights are recognized and supported at all times. As required by the provisions of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA), the hospital will develop and communicate a multi-year accessibility plan that describes the measures taken in the past year and planned for in the upcoming year(s) to identify, remove and prevent barriers to persons with disabilities.

4.0 Procedure – Interpretation Services

4.1 Access and Use of Interpreter Services

- a) Consent must be obtained from the patient/SDM for use of an Interpreter Service:
- b) The NH staff member requests consent from the patient/SDM.
- c) If consent is obtained, continue with the process.
- d) Consent is documented on the health record by a member of the treatment team.
- e) If consent is declined, a member of the treatment team may inform the patient that treatment may be compromised, or it may not be possible to provide treatment resources.
- f) NH staff must use the approved translator to translate all NH written materials to ensure quality standards.

4.2 Voyce Global is the dedicated interpreter provider for Niagara Health. Voyce Global offers both Over-The-Phone (OTP) Interpretation and Video Remote Interpretation (VRI). OTP Interpretation can be accessed via any phone by dialing the dedicated phone line. VRI can be accessed via a dedicated NH iPad equipped with the Voyce Global application, or through the Integrated Bedside Terminal (IBT).

4.3 Voyce Global provides on-demand interpretation 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and offers over 240 languages via audio, and over 40 languages via video.

4.4 Over-The-Phone Interpretation

- a) Staff and Physicians can call Voyce at 1-855-659-3053 to have a live interpreter available while interacting with patients.
- b) To use this service:
 - i) Dial 1-855-659-3053
 - ii) Select your language
 - iii) The interpreter or operator will ask certain intake questions, such as site and department (this is for invoicing purposes)
 - iv) If speaking with an operator, they will then connect you with your interpreter.
 - v) The interpreter will identify themselves by name and interpreter ID.
 - vi) The interpreter can add a third party to the call upon request.
 - vii) When the session is complete, be sure to hang up the line to ensure the session is closed.
- c) OTP Interpretation can also be accessed via Switchboard / Resource Centre.

4.5 Over-The-Phone Interpretation via Vocera

- a) To access interpretation via a Vocera badge:
 - i) Tap the Vocera badge
 - ii) Say “call translation services”
 - iii) Auto attendant will ask for input or wait for operator
 - iv) Wait for operators
 - v) The operator will ask intake questions, such as language, site and department
 - vi) The interpreter will identify themselves by name and interpreter ID
 - vii) The interpreter can add a third party to the call upon request
 - viii) When the session is complete, be sure to hang up the line to ensure the session is closed

4.6 Video Remote Interpretation

- a) **VRI on iPad Device:**
 - i) Open the Voyce application on your device.
 - ii) Press the magnifying glass icon to choose your language.
 - iii) If required, users have the option to select video/audio and interpreter gender preferences. To do so, tap the “additional options” button on the language selection screen.
 - iv) Users will be asked to answer a series of intake questions, such as site and department (this is for invoicing purposes).
 - v) The user will be connected with an interpreter. The interpreter will identify themselves by name and their interpreter ID.

- vi) Users can add a third party to the call by tapping the button on the upper left, select either video or audio invitation, and add users via text or email.
- vii) When the session is complete, end the call by tapping the hang-up button. The interpreter will be available to reconnect for one minute after the call ends.
- b) **VRI on Integrated Bedside Terminal:**
 - i) Open the Voyce application, located under “My Hospital Stay”.
 - ii) Select the “Get Interpreter” icon.
 - iii) Select the language using the drop-down menu.
 - iv) If required, users have the option to select video/audio and interpreter gender preferences. To do so, tap the “additional options” button on the language selection screen.
 - v) Users will be asked to answer a series of intake questions, such as site and department (this is for invoicing purposes).
 - vi) NH staff or Physician will be asked to enter a PIN.
 - vii) Once verified, you will then be connected with an interpreter. The interpreter will identify themselves by name and their interpreter ID.
 - viii) To add a third party to a call, click the invite button on the right side of the screen, select either phone or video invitation, and add users via text or email.
 - ix) When the session is complete, end the call by tapping the hang-up button. The interpreter will be available to reconnect for one minute after the call ends.

5.0 Procedure – Accessible Customer Service

5.1 All NH employees, volunteers, agents, and others who deal with the public or other third parties and those involved in developing customer service policies, practices, and procedures must receive Accessibility Awareness Training.

5.2 Accessibility Awareness Training will include:

- a) How to provide goods and services in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
- b) How to interact and communicate with a person with a disability in a manner that takes into account his or her disability.
- c) The process for people to provide feedback on how we provide goods and services to people with disabilities and how we will respond to any feedback and take action on any complaint.
- d) How to interact with persons with disabilities who use an alternative device or require the assistance of a guide dog, other service animal or a support person to access services or goods.
- e) Information on all NH policies and practices with regard to the AODA.
- f) A review of the purpose of the AODA and the requirements of the Customer Service Standards under the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR).
- g) How to use equipment or devices on the NH premises that may help with the provision of goods or services and how to adapt existing service delivery methods to assist a person with a disability.
- h) What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing NH goods or services.

5.3 Assistive Devices

All reasonable and necessary consideration should be given to persons requiring the use of assistive devices in order to ascertain what device is needed, how it is to be used properly, and how the patient will benefit from the provision and use of the device or associated services. The costs and availability, if any, of other measures which may be used as an alternative should also be considered.

- a) **Bell Relay Service** - This service can also be used to enable telephone communication with hearing disabled persons. The person wishing to engage in conversation with the hearing disabled individual speaks to the operator, who will type the conversation and provide it to the hearing-disabled patient and/or transmit the message to the patient's Teletypewriter (TTY) With the Voice Carry Over function enabled, the hearing-impaired person can read the message on the TTY and respond using their voice or through return type.
- b) **Telephone Device for the Deaf (TDD/TTY)** - The Telephone Device for the Deaf (TDD) or Teletypewriter (TTY) transmits a visual signal over a standard telephone line. This technology is available for individuals with severe to profound hearing loss or poor speech recognition ability.

As one person types their message, the signal is transmitted along the telephone line and is decoded at the other end by the TTY device. It is necessary for both parties to have a TDD of TTY system to communicate in this manner.

5.4 Interruption of Services

Under the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) and in compliance with AODA standards the NH is responsible for taking certain actions if there is a temporary disruption in any NH facility or of services in whole or in part. The NH shall give notice of the disruption to the public as follows:

- a) Materials for print or on the web will be created using the following requirements:
 - i) the use of high-contrast colours for text and backgrounds
 - ii) the font size will be between 12 and 18 depending on the font family
 - iii) decorative fonts will be avoided
 - iv) a clean and simple design will be used to make the information easier to read
 - v) content will be written in plain language for all to understand
- b) Notice of the disruption must include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if any, that are available.
- c) Notice will be given by posting the information at every public entrance on premises, by Security, Engineering or a designate under the direction of the Clinical Program Director or On-call Manager.
- d) The Clinical Program Director or On-call Manager will contact the Webmaster to post the service interruption on the NH public website.
- e) When required the NH will notify the media through Corporate Communications.
- f) Fan out lists may be distributed under the direction of the Vice-President, his or her Designate, or the most senior staff member by assigning staff.
- g) NH Corporate Communications may use social media to provide live-feed updates with regard to the service interruptions.

5.4 Feedback Process

The public can provide feedback on the accessibility aspect of the provision of goods and services by the NH through the Accessibility Advisory Committee by:

- a) Email: patientrelations@niagarahealth.on.ca
- b) Mail addressed to: Patient Relations, St. Catharines Site, 1200 4th Avenue, St. Catharines, ON, L2S 0A9
- c) By phone: 905.378.4647 ext. 44423
- d) In person: Patient Relations, St Catharines Site, 1200 4th Avenue, St. Catharines, ON, L2S 0A9
- e) Feedback will be responded to within 3 business days following its receipt by NH.

5.5 Notice of Availability of Documents

NH will notify its clients that the documents required by the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) are available upon request.

5.6 Format of Documents

Within reasonable expense, any document, or information contained in a document requested by a person with a disability will be provided, in advance or upon notification and request, in a format that takes into account that person's disability. The NH and the person with a disability may agree upon the format to be used for the document or information.

6.0 Definitions

AAC - Accessibility Advisory Committee. The purpose of the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) is to identify issues and concerns regarding accessibility. From these concerns, the AAC can recommend ways for the hospital to make improvements, while making sure a course of action is in place for addressing those issues.

Affiliates – individuals who are not employed by the organization but perform specific tasks at or for the organization, including the following:

- a) Professional with hospital privileges – refers to those professionals formally affiliated with the hospital through the process of review of credentials and approval of privileges (e.g. physician)
- b) Students – individuals gaining practical/clinical experience in the hospital whether directly affiliated with the hospital or not.
- c) Volunteers – individuals who perform recognized functions with the hospital on a volunteer basis.

AODA - Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act

IBT – Integrated Bedside Terminals

Interpretations – The process of rendering spoken language into another spoken language or the process of rendering spoken language into a visual language (e.g. American Sign Language (ASL) for the Deaf).

Interpreters – Any person who formally provides interpretations for the purposes of this policy must meet the standards for health care interpreting: maintain confidentiality, impartiality/objectivity, have respect for all individuals, be culturally sensitive, be accurate and proficient in using both languages and in medical terminology, maintain role boundaries, and use a standardized interpreting format.

LEP - Limited English Proficiency

OTP – Over-The-Phone Interpretation

SDM - Substitute Decision Maker

TDD - Telephone Device for the Deaf

TTY - Teletypewriter

VRI – Video Remote Interpretation

7.0 Education/Communications

N/A

8.0 Appendices

N/A

9.0 Related Documents

[Consent to Treatment -- Policy and Procedure](#)

10.0 Related Forms

N/A

11.0 References

11.1 Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and associated Integrated Accessibility Standards and Regulations.

11.2 Blind Person's Rights Act and associated regulation R.R.O 1990, Reg. 58.

- 11.3 Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom – Constitution Act, 1982.
- 11.4 Health Protection and Promotion Act 1990 and associated Ontario regulations.
- 11.5 Ontario Human Rights Code, 1990.
- 11.6 Ontario Regulations 191/11 Integrated Accessibility Standards.
- 11.7 Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991, S.O. 1991, c. 18.
- 11.8 Social Worker and Social Service Work Act, 1998, S.O. 1998, c. 31.

12.0 Supercedes

Policy · NH Accessibility – 360-020-008

Policy · NH Accessibility – Customer Service – 360-020-009

Policy · NH Accessibility – Information and Communication – 360-020-012

Policy and Procedure · NH Accessibility – Interpretation Services – 360-020-010 and 360-020-010