

# Accessibility Plan for Customer Service

The mission of Trent Hills Family Health Team (THFHT) and Hillside Family Medicine (HFM) is to provide

- comprehensive primary care through an integrated team of caring professionals,
- timely access to a full spectrum of high-quality primary health care services,
- and educating and supporting our patients to better care for themselves.

## **Our commitment to providing service to people with disabilities**

THFHT/HFM strives to provide its 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 and benefit from the same services, in the same place and in a similar way as other patients.

### **1. Communication**

We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. All staff will be trained on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.

#### **Telephone services**

Staff will be trained to speak clearly and slowly on the telephone using clear and plain language. We will offer Bell Relay services, if appropriate.

If telephone communication is not suitable, email will be offered for booking appointments and renewing prescriptions.

#### **Written Material**

We will ensure our policies, letters and invoices are available, upon request, in other formats (large print) or will be explained verbally to patients, in person or over the telephone.

#### **Signs**

We will ensure any signs/notices that we post adhere to CNIB standards of Clear Print Accessibility Guidelines as much as possible.

### **2. Assistive devices**

We will ensure that our staff is trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by patients with disabilities while accessing our services.

We will also ensure that staff knows how to use the following assistive devices available on our premises: Low Energy Power Operated doors, elevators and wheelchairs.

### **3. Service animals**

Service animals shall be permitted entry to all THFHT/HFM facilities and meeting rooms that are open to the public. The service animal may accompany a patient into the examination room, however, due to infection control, may be restricted from the procedures room. The clinician will assess the situation on an individual basis. We will also ensure that all staff is trained to interact correctly with people who are accompanied by a service animal.

#### 4. **Support persons**

We welcome people with disabilities who are accompanied by a 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. Before discussing any confidential information before a support person, the clinical must ensure that the patient gives consent to do so.

#### 5. **Notice of temporary disruption**

THFHT/HFM will notify patients of any planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services usually used by people with disabilities such as the power-assisted doors or the wheelchair accessible washrooms. Notices, stating the reason for the disruption, the anticipated length of disruption and alternative services, will be placed on outside doors and on the website.

On the rare occasion that both elevators are out of service, patients who are known to have mobility issues will be called to rebook their appointments. When patients are given reminder calls, they will be advised of the suspended elevator service. A notice will be posted on our website, on our recorded telephone message and by all public entrances to alert patients to the lack of elevator service.

#### 6. **Training for staff**

THFHT/HFM will provide training to all employees and students within one month after a staff member commences his/her duties.

Training will include:

- The purpose 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.
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing our services
- THFHT/HFM's policies, practices and procedures relating to the customer service standard.
- Retraining on an ongoing basis as necessary.

#### 7. **Feedback process**

THFHT/HFM wishes to meet and surpass patient expectations while serving persons with disabilities. Comments on our services are welcome and appreciated.

Feedback can be made verbally to a healthcare provider, in writing or by filling out an Accessibility Feedback form. These forms are available on our website or at any of our clinics.

Written feedback should be directed to: Delayne Donald, Executive Director  
Trent Hills Family Health Team  
119 Isabella Street  
Campbellford, ON K0L 1L0  
Fax: 705-653-5483  
Email: clerk@thfht.com

If requested, a reply can be expected in 5 business days.

**8. Modifications to this or other policies**

We are committed to developing patient 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 THFHT/HFM that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be modified or removed.

**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 the Executive Director of THFHT/HFM.