

Community Care of West Niagara - Operational Policy

Accessible Client Service

Community Care of West Niagara strives at all times to provide services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. All goods and services provided by Community Care of West Niagara shall follow the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity.

900 SCOPE

- This Policy applies to the provision of goods and services at premises owned and operated by Community Care of West Niagara.
- This Policy applies to employees, volunteers, agents and/or contractors who deal with the public or other third parties that act on behalf of Community Care of West Niagara, including when the provision of goods and services occurs off the premises of Community Care of West Niagara.
- The section of this Policy that addresses the use of guide dogs, service animals and service dogs only applies to the provision of goods and services that take place at premises owned and operated by Community Care of West Niagara.
- This Policy shall also apply to all persons who participate in the development of the Community Care of West Niagara's policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods and services to members of the public or third parties.

901 PROVISION OF GOODS AND SERVICES TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Community Care of West Niagara will make every reasonable effort to ensure that its policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity by:

- Ensuring that all clients receive that same value and quality.
- Allowing clients with disabilities to do things in their own ways, at their own pace when accessing goods and services as long as this does not present a safety risk.
- Using alternative methods, when possible, to ensure that clients with disabilities have access to the same services, in the same place and in a similar manner.
- Taking into account individual needs when providing goods and services.
- Communicating in a manner that considers the client's disability.

902 ASSISTIVE DEVICES

Client's own assistive device(s):

- Persons with disabilities may use their own assistive devices, as required, when accessing goods or services provided by Community Care of West Niagara.
- In cases where the assistive device presents a safety concern, or where accessibility might be an issue, other reasonable measures will be used to ensure the access of goods and services. For example, where elevators are not present and where an individual requires assistive devices for the purposes of mobility, service will be provided in a location that meets the needs of the client.

903 GUIDE/SERVICE ANIMALS

A client who is accompanied by guide/service animal will be allowed access to premises that are open to the public unless otherwise excluded by law. "No pet" policies do not apply to guide/service animals.

FOOD SERVICE AREAS

A client accompanied by a guide/service animal will be allowed access to food service areas that are open to the public unless otherwise excluded by law.

RECOGNIZING A GUIDE/SERVICE ANIMAL

If it is not readily apparent that the animal is being used by the client for reasons relating to his or her disability, Community Care of West Niagara may request verification from the client which may include:

- A letter from a physician, or nurse, confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons related to the disability.
- A valid identification card signed by the Attorney General of Canada.
- A certificate of training from a recognized guide dog, or service animal training school.

CARE AND CONTROL OF THE ANIMAL

The client that is accompanied by a guide/service animal is responsible for maintaining care and control of the animal at all times.

ALLERGIES

If a health and safety concern presents itself, for example in the form of a severe allergy to the animal, Community Care of West Niagara will make all reasonable efforts to meet the needs of all individuals.

904 SUPPORT PERSONS

If a client with a disability is accompanied by a support person, Community Care of West Niagara will ensure that both persons are allowed to enter the premises together and that the client is not prevented from having access to the support person.

There may be times where seating and availability prevent the client and support person from sitting beside each other. In these situations Community Care of West Niagara will make every reasonable attempt to accommodate the client's needs. In situations where confidential information might be discussed, consent will be obtained from the client, prior to any conversation where confidential information might be discussed.

905 NOTICE OF DISRUPTIONS IN SERVICE

Service disruptions may occur due to reasons that may or may not be within the control or knowledge of Community Care of West Niagara. In the event of any temporary disruptions to facilities or services that clients with disabilities rely on to access or use Community Care of West Niagara's goods or services, reasonable efforts will be made to provide advance notice. In some circumstances such as in the situation of unplanned temporary disruptions, advance notice may not be possible. In the event that a notification needs to be posted, the following information will be included unless it is not readily available or known:

- Goods or services that are disrupted or unavailable.
- Reason for the disruption.
- Anticipated duration.
- A description of alternative services or options.

When disruptions occur Community Care of West Niagara will provide notice by:

- Posting notices in conspicuous places, including at the point of disruption, at the main entrance and the nearest accessible entrance to the service disruption.
- Contacting clients with appointments.
- Verbally notifying clients when they are making a reservation or appointment.
- By any other method that may be reasonable under the circumstances.

906 TRAINING

Training will be provided to all employees, volunteers, agents and/or contractors who deal with the public or other third parties that act on behalf of Community Care of West Niagara, for example:

- Drivers.
- Vendors.
- Event operators.

TRAINING PROVISIONS

As reflected in *Ontario Regulation 429/07*, regardless of the format, training will cover the following:

- A review of the purpose of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*.
- A review of the requirements of the *Accessibility Standards for Client Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07*.
- Instructions on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.
- Instructions on how to interact with people with disabilities who:
 - Use assistive devices.
 - Require the assistance of a service animal.
 - Require the use of a support person (including the handling of admission fees).
 - Instructions on what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing your services.
 - Community Care of West Niagara's policies, procedures and practices pertaining to providing accessible client service to clients with disabilities.

TRAINING SCHEDULE:

Community Care of West Niagara will provide training as soon as possible. Training will be provided to new employees, volunteers, agents and/or contractors who deal with the public or act on our behalf during orientation. Revised training will be provided to reflect changes to legislation, procedures and/or practices.

RECORD OF TRAINING:

Community Care of West Niagara will keep records of training that include the dates training was provided.

907 NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY AND FORMAT OF DOCUMENTS

Community Care of West Niagara shall notify clients that the documents related to the 'Accessibility Standard for Client Service' are available upon request and in a format that takes into account the client's disability. Notification will be given by posting the information in a conspicuous place, owned and operated by Community Care of West Niagara, and/or by any other reasonable method.

Clients may submit feedback or questions related to accessibility to:

Carole Fuhrer, Executive Director
Community Care of West Niagara
4309 Central Avenue, Box 171
Beamsville, Ontario L0R 1B0
Telephone: 905-563-5822
E-mail: carole@communitycarewn.ca

Clients who provide formal feedback will receive acknowledgements of their feedback, along with any resulting actions based on concerns that were submitted. This Policy, and its related procedures, will be reviewed as required in the event of legislative changes.