

Accessibility Policy

Policy Statement

Kingston West Family Chiropractic (KWFC) is committed to preventing, identifying and removing barriers that impede the ability of people with disabilities to access care and services. This includes patients, families, staff, chiropractors, contractors, volunteers and members of the KWFC community.

In June, 2005 the Ontario government passed the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA). The purpose of this enhanced Act is to develop, implement and enforce standards of accessibility for all Ontarians. KWFC's Accessibility Policy is consistent with the AODA, 2005 and the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07 [See Appendix].

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline practices and procedures in place at KWFC to help identify and remove barriers that impede a person's ability to access care and services.

Definitions

Assistive Devices and Measures:

Assistive devices and measures are supports made available by providers to improve access to care for patients with disabilities. For example: wheelchairs, volunteers, real-time captioning services (on-screen typing of what speakers are saying), sign language interpreters or deaf-blind interveners. Other examples include, Telephone Teletypes (TTY) to communicate with clients who are deaf, hard of hearing, have speech impairments or are deaf-blind (*Guide to the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation*).

Disability:

According to the Ontario Human Rights Code, a "Disability" is defined as:

- a. 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 a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,
- b. A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
- c. A learning disability, or a dysfunction in 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 insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

The definition includes disabilities of different severity, visible as well as non-visible disabilities, and disabilities the effects of which may come and go (*Sunnybrook Accessibility Working Group Accessibility Plan*).

Personal Assistive Devices:

For the purpose of this policy, Personal Assistive Devices are personal supports used by persons with disabilities that enable them to carry out the activities of daily living and allow access to hospital services. Patient-owned equipment such as power-mobility devices (power wheelchairs or scooters) are regarded as Personal Assistive Devices.

Service Animals:

Service animals are used by people with many different kinds of disabilities. Examples of service animals include dogs used by people who are blind, hearing alert animals for people who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing, and animals trained to alert an individual to an oncoming seizure and lead them to safety (*Guide to the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation*).

Support Person:

A "Support Person" accompanies a person with a disability, in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services. Medical needs may include, but are not limited to, monitoring an individual's health or providing medical support by being available in the event of a seizure. A Support Person may be a paid professional, a volunteer, family member or friend of the person with a disability (*Guide to the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation*).

Procedure

KWFC will ensure we are identifying and removing barriers to access for people with disabilities by: (please refer to the other policies and practices listed in Appendix A for specific strategies):

KWFC will consult with its existing clients and other members of the disabled community to identify the existing and potential barriers to full inclusion of the people with disabilities. It will be a fundamental practice of the clinic's practitioners and staff to review and update the accessibility plan of the practice in order to afford people with disabilities the same opportunities to access the goods and services of KWFC as anyone else in the community.

- Encouraging people with disabilities to use their own personal assistive devices to improve access to KWFC's goods and services.
- Enabling people with disabilities to access our goods and utilize our services by offering assistive devices and measures.
- Communicating with a person with a disability in a manner that takes into account his or her disability.
- Allowing people with disabilities to bring their guide dog or service animal with them to areas of the premises that are open to the public.
- Permitting people with disabilities who use a support person to accompany them and ensuring that a person with a disability has access to his or her support person while on our premises.
- Training staff, chiropractor, contractors and volunteers about key principles and accessibility strategies and tools (i.e. Accessibility workshop, E-Learning module and Accessibility Booklet).
- Providing notice when facilities or services that people with disabilities rely on to access our services are temporarily disrupted.
- Establishing a process for people to provide feedback on how goods or services are delivered and explaining how KWFC will respond to any feedback and what action will be taken. It is the responsibility of every staff member to be attentive to the concerns of the practice members, their families and visitors and to resolve concerns related to accessibility. There are a number of strategies that are available to patients/ families/staff and chiropractors/RMTs to provide feedback regarding accessibility.

References & Appendix:

Relevant Policies, Procedures and Practices

- [Disruptions in Service](#)
- [Patient Concerns Policy](#)
- [Service Animals](#)
- [KWFC's Rights and Responsibilities](#)
- [Accessibility Working Group Accessibility Plan](#)
- [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005](#)

Guide to the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation

Standards of Accessibility under the AODA

- Customer Service: Service delivery to the public; also includes business practices, employee training
- Transportation: This standard needs to reflect a variety of environments, financial capabilities of users/providers and the differing modes of travel including conventional and specialized modes, and on-demand taxi services
- Information and Communication: Information and communications provided to the consumer or end-user through print, telephone, electronic devices, and in person; also includes publications and software applications
- The Built Environment: Access to, from and within buildings and outdoor spaces; also includes counter heights, aisle and door widths, parking, signage, pedestrian access routes and signal systems

- Employment: Hiring and retaining employees; also includes employment practices, policies and processes such as job advertisements and interviewing

Principles of Customer Service:

- **Dignity:** Refers to policies, procedures and practices that treat a person with a disability as a client who is as valued and deserving of effective and full service as any other client. They do not treat people with disabilities as an afterthought or force them to accept lesser service, quality or convenience. Service delivery needs to take into account how people with disabilities can effectively access and use services and show respect for these methods.
- **Independence:** In some instances, independence means freedom from control or influence of others' freedom to make your own choices. In other situations, it may mean the freedom to do things in your own way. People who may move or speak more slowly should not be denied an opportunity to participate in a program or service because of this factor.
- **Integration:** Integrated services are those services that allow people with disabilities to fully benefit from the same services, in the same place and in the same or similar way as other clients. Integration means that policies, practices and procedures are designed to be accessible to everyone including people with disabilities. Sometimes integration does not serve the needs of all people with disabilities. In these cases, it is necessary to use alternate measures to provide goods or services. Alternate measures are ways of serving people that are not completely integrated into the regular business activities of the organization, for example, email.
- **Equal Opportunity:** Equal opportunity means having the same chances, options, benefits and results as others. In the case of services, it means that people with disabilities have the same opportunity to benefit from the way you provide services as others. They should not have to make significantly more effort to access or obtain service. They should also not have to accept lesser quality or more inconvenience.