ADMINISTRATION POLICY MANUAL **I ADM O 10.00**

SECTION:	**AODA - ACCESSIBILITY**	Original Issue:	2013-10-23
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SUBJECT:	**CUSTOMER SERVICE & IASR**	Review/Revision:	Jan 2019
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APPROVED BY:	**PRESIDENT & CEO**		

Mission: Collectively, our foundation, purpose and vision capture our mission of care for the people we serve.
Foundation: A Catholic organization inspired by Christ's ministry and the legacy of the Grey Sisters of the Immaculate Conception.
Purpose: Quality, person-directed long-term care and support for people in our community.
Vision: A welcoming and inclusive home where each person feels cared for, supported and engaged.
Values: Respect, Compassion Spirituality, Integrity, Excellence and Collaboration

REFERENCES: ***Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)*.**
Ontario Human Rights Code.

POLICY: St. Patrick's Home endeavours to provide its care and services in a way that respects the independence and dignity of all persons and encourages integration and quality of opportunity. St. Patrick's Home is committed to preventing, identifying and removing barriers that impede the ability of persons with disabilities to access our care and services.

The objective of this policy is to identify what the equal treatment provisions are of the Ontario Human Rights Code, through the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA), 2005 and the Regulation requirement as a minimum legal standard in care and service delivery, to persons with disabilities and addresses the following:

- The provision of care and services to persons with disabilities;
- The use of assistive devices by persons with disabilities;
- The use of service animals by persons with disabilities;
- The use of support persons by persons with disabilities;
- Notice of temporary disruptions in services and facilities;
- Training to all staff regarding interacting with persons with disabilities;
- Customer feedback regarding the provision of care and services to persons with disabilities; and
- Notice of availability and format of documents.

PROCEDURE: The CEO, Management and Leadership Team will:

1. Identify and remove barriers to access for people with disabilities;

2. Train all employees and volunteers about key principles and accessibility strategies to ensure that communication with persons with disabilities is respectful and done in manner that takes into account such persons' disabilities;

3. Ensure contractors working in our homes have been trained on how to interact with persons with disabilities, prior to working in the home;

4. Communicate with persons with disabilities in a manner that takes into account the person's disability;

5. Provide assistive devices where reasonable and necessary;

6. Permit the use of *personal assistive devices* or technologies in an unrestricted manner in all areas of the building to which residents, family members, vendors, customers or employees have access, except when subject to operator or resident safety and/or business integrity.

7. Welcome persons with disabilities who are accompanied by a *service animal* to the home to which the public has such access to and the animal is not otherwise excluded by law or for health and safety reasons.

8. Permit *support persons* to accompany visitors with disabilities to all areas that are open to the public. Where there is admission fees for an event organized by St. Patrick's Home, persons with a disability shall be expected to pay the same fee as other attendees. No admission fee shall be charged to their support person.

9. Provide information on *Service Disruptions to* persons with disabilities who might be affected by the disruption and identify the reason for the disruption, its duration, and information about alternative services.

10. Welcome *Feedback* on the ways in which it provides its customer service to persons with disabilities. The feedback may be provided in person, by telephone, in writing or by electronic text.

11. Investigate feedback that is in contradiction to the above requirements and determining the actions to be taken. In all cases, every effort will be made to respond to the feedback in a timely and effective manner.

12. Documents that detail St. Patrick's Home Accessibility policies and procedures will be and made available upon request. St. Patrick's Home will make every effort to make the information available to persons with disabilities in a format that take into account their disability.

All employees will utilize any of the following principles as required:

1. Ask a person with a disability how to best help and communicate with them;

2. Respect the dignity of persons with disabilities;

3. Speak directly to the customer, not the intervener or support person accompanying the person with the disability;

    - **People with hearing loss:** attract the customer's attention before speaking; ensure you are in a well-lit area where customer can see your face and read your lips; reduce background noise or move to a quieter area; ask if another method of communicating would be easier (i.e. using a pen and paper)

    - **People with vision loss/impairment:** don't assume the individual can't see you; identify yourself when you approach your customer; ask if they would like you to read any printed material out loud to them; offer your elbow to guide them if needed, offer to expand print material

    - **People with learning disabilities:** provide information in a way that takes into account the customer's disability; be patient

    - **People with speech or language impairments:** when possible ask questions that can be answered with "yes" or "no", don't interrupt or finish the customer's sentences, be patient

    - **People with mental health disabilities:** be calm and reassuring, ask them to tell you the best way to help

    - **People with intellectual/developmental disabilities:** use plain language, provide one piece of information at a time

4. When interacting with people using personal assistive devices, such as wheelchairs, walkers hearing aids, canes or speech amplification devices, do not move assistive devices or equipment out of the customer's reach or handle assistive devices without permission

5. Avoid touching or addressing service animals, as they are working animals and have to pay attention at all times. Staff unsure if the animal is a pet or service animal should ask the customer.

6. Where people with disabilities are accompanied by a support person (i.e. personal support worker, volunteer, family member or friend) take your lead from the customer or the person requiring your services.