

**CORPORATE MANUAL**

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| <b>SUBJECT: Accessibility — Guide Dogs and Other Service Animals -- Customer Service Regulation 429/07</b> | <b>NUMBER: 1 – 05 – 10</b>                                                             |
| <b>SECTION: Introduction</b>                                                                               | <b>RESPONSIBLE DISCIPLINES: All Staff, Volunteers, Agents, Physicians and Students</b> |
| <b>DATE: September 10, 2009</b>                                                                            | <b>APPROVED BY: Operations Committee, Senior Management Team</b>                       |
| <b>REVIEW FREQUENCY: annually</b>                                                                          | <b>Policy: X Standard: X</b>                                                           |
| <b>REVISED/REVIEWED:</b>                                                                                   | <b>Procedure: Guideline: X</b>                                                         |

**Policy:**

Cambridge Memorial Hospital is committed to promoting, providing and maintaining an environment where respect and dignity is demonstrated at all times. The right of the individual to be accompanied by a Guide dog or other Service animal, except where excluded by law is supported.

**Clinical Note:** Guide dogs and Service dogs are not pets but working animals. Staff will refrain from touching or petting the guide dog or other service animal.

**Definitions:**

**Guide Dog:** is a dog trained as a guide for a blind person.

**Service Animal:** are animals that are individually trained to perform tasks for people with disabilities such as guiding people who are blind, alerting people who are deaf, pulling wheelchairs, alerting and protecting a person who is having a seizure, or performing other special tasks.

**Standard:**

- Guide dogs and other Service animals may accompany people with disabilities in all areas of the hospital except where excluded by law or where there is a significant risk to a staff person or member of the public (identified risk of severe allergic reaction).
- Manager, staff and person with a disability will collaborate, discuss and develop an accessibility plan identifying necessary support arrangements.
- Guide dogs and other Service animals are not permitted where sterile procedures occur in accordance with the Health Promotion and Protection Act including but not limited to:
  - Operating Rooms,
  - Minor Procedure Rooms or Rooms where sterile interventional procedures are occurring
  - In any room where radiation exposure occurs (X-ray, CT)
  - Rooms in which transmission based precautions are in place (Isolated rooms).

- Staff will collaborate and discuss with the person with a disability areas where the presence of a Guide dog or Service animal is not allowed prior to their arrival (where possible) and develop alternate arrangements.
- Infection Prevention and Control and the Manager/Shift Administrator and/or Manager on Call must be contacted whenever a patient with a Guide dog or Service animal is admitted to the hospital or, whenever there is a concern regarding the safety and/or security of persons in the are
- A patient admitted with a Guide dog or Service animal will be accommodated in a private room at no extra charge.
- The care of the Guide dog or Service animal is the responsibility of the owner.
- If in accordance with this policy, it becomes necessary to separate the Guide dog or Service animal from its owner, healthcare personnel will make all reasonable efforts to help facilitate the transfer of the animal to a designated person.
- The person who requires the Guide dog or Service animal may be asked to provide a letter from a physician or nurse, or documentation from the Ministry of the Attorney General's office confirming that the person requires a Guide dog or Service animal.
- Notice of the availability of CMH Accessibility policies will be posted in a conspicuous place on the premises and/or on the CMH web page (Meditech, the intranet and internet).
- All policies and procedure documents related to Accessibility will be available to the public, in a format agreed upon with the person with a disability.

**Guidelines:**

1. Tips on interacting with a customer who uses a service animal:
  - a) Service animal is a working animal, not a pet.
  - b) Avoid touching or addressing Service animals: they are working and are required to pay attention at all times.
  - c) Avoid making assumptions about the animal. Not all Service animals wear special collars or harnesses. If you are not sure if the animal is a pet or Service animal, ask the person with a disability.
  - d) Patient is responsible for the care and supervision of their Service animal. Staff is not expected to provide care or food for the animal. However, staff can provide water for the Service animal if the patient requests this.
2. Service animals and their roles:

| Service Animal                         | Key Tasks                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Users                                                                 |
|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Autism assistance or service dog.      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Keeps a child from running into danger and provides assistance when sensory stimulus is heightened. Dog is attached to the child's waist by a belt and a leash held by an adult.</li> </ul> | People with autism or other developmental/ intellectual disabilities. |
| Guide dog, dog guide or seeing eye dog | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Follows directions of owner, alerts owner to changes in elevation (e.g., curbs, stairs) and obstacles.</li> </ul>                                                                           | People with vision loss.                                              |

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| Hearing ear, hearing, sound alert or hearing alert dog, cat or animal                                                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Alerts owner to sounds often by a nudge or pawing and leads him/her to the source of the sound.</li> <li>▪ May use a special signal to alert owner to fire alarm.</li> </ul> | People who are Deaf, oral deaf, deafened or hard of hearing. |  |
| Psychiatric service dog                                                                                                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Retrieves and prompts the person to take medicine, retrieves or activates medical alert, leads person out of crowds, etc.</li> </ul>                                         | People with mental health disabilities.                      |  |
| Service or mobility dog or animal, special skills dog or animal<br><br>(Small ponies or miniature horses are used but are not as common). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ May pull wheelchairs, carry objects, pull items, turn handles or push buttons such as door openers. Larger dogs may provide balance support.</li> </ul>                      | People with physical disabilities.                           |  |
| Seizure, seizure alert, seizure assist or seizure response dog or animal                                                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Steers owner from danger during a seizure, activates medical alert</li> <li>▪ Can alert owner to an oncoming seizure</li> </ul>                                              | People who have epilepsy or other seizure disorders.         |  |

Ministry of Community and Social Services. Training Resource - Customer Service Standard 429/07 Pg. 27

**Developed in consultation with:**

- Patient Relations and Safety Specialist
- Infection Prevention and Control
- Human Resources
- Manager, Planning and Development
- Accessibility Committee

**References:**

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

[http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws\\_statutes\\_05a11\\_e.htm](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_05a11_e.htm)

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 Customer Service Standard 429/07

[http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/source/regqs/english/2007/elaws\\_src\\_regqs\\_r07429\\_e.htm](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/source/regqs/english/2007/elaws_src_regqs_r07429_e.htm)

Americans with disabilities Act, 1990

<http://www.ada.gov/pubs/ada.htm>

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. Training Resource: Customer Service Standard 429/07. February, 2009 <http://mcss.gov.on.ca/mcss/english/pillars/accessibilityOntario/accesson/>

Blind Persons' Rights Act. R.S., c. 40, s. 1, s. 2,  
<http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/legc/statutes/blindper.htm>

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. Taking a close look at the Standards: Impact and Implications. Ontario Hospital Association Conference November 17, 2008. Toronto, ON

Canadian National Institute for the Blind Kitchener, ON. Accessibility Specialist