

Alexandra Marine and General Hospital	Effective Date: November 20, 2009
ACCESSIBILITY - CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS	Review Date: November 20, 2011
Accessibility - Guide Dogs and Other Service Animals	Approved By: President/CEO

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Policy/Purpose

Policy

Alexandra Marine and General 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

Service Animals are defined as any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including, but not limited to, guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals with impaired hearing to intruders or sounds, providing minimal protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, or fetching dropped items.

Guide Dogs are specifically trained to provide mobility and independence to individuals with visual impairments.

Hearing Dogs alert the person to important sounds such as a baby's cry, a knock on the door, a fire or smoke alarm, a ringing telephone or even the presence of an intruder. Often hearing dogs provide the individual with a disability a sense of security and enhance their sense of well-being and personal safety.

Companion Dogs often assist families living with autism or support those with specific medical conditions such as seizures, life threatening medical conditions or at times even those with mental illness. These animals are trained to specifically summons help in a crisis.

Therapy Dogs are used for the physical or emotional benefit of patients in hospitals, long-term care and rehabilitation facilities. Therapy dogs can improve quality of life, reduce loneliness and depression and enhance cognitive function, mobility and promote recovery and a sense of well-being.

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).
- 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.
- 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, health care 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 Alexandra Marine and General Hospital Accessibility policies will be posted in a conspicuous place on the premises and/or on the Alexandra Marine and General Hospital web page (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"> • 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. 	People with autism or other developmental/intellectual disabilities.
Guide dog, dog guide or seeing eye dog	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follows directions of owner, alerts owner to changes in elevation (e.g., curbs, stairs) and obstacles. 	People with vision loss.
Hearing ear, hearing, sound alert or hearing alert dog,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alerts owner to sounds often by a nudge or pawing and leads him/her to the source of the sound. • May use a special signal to alert 	People who are Deaf, oral deaf, deafened or hard of hearing.

cat or animal owner to fire alarm.

Psychiatric service dog	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Retrieves and prompts the person to take medicine, retrieves or activates medical alert, leads person out of crowds, etc.	People with mental health disabilities.
Service or mobility dog or animal, special skills dog or animal (Small ponies or miniature horses are used but are not as common).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">May pull wheelchairs, carry objects, pull items, turn handles or push buttons such as door openers. Larger dogs may provide balance support.	People with physical disabilities.
Seizure, seizure alert, seizure assist or seizure response dog or animal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Steers owner from danger during a seizure, activates medical alertCan alert owner to an oncoming seizure	People who have epilepsy or other seizure disorders.

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

References

[Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005](#)

[Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 Customer Service Standard 429/07](#)

[Americans with disabilities Act, 1990](#)

[Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005](#). Training Resource: Customer Service Standard 429/07. February, 2009

[Blind Persons' Rights Act. R.S., c. 40, s. 1, s. 2](#)

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

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Accessibility-Guide Dogs and Other Service Animals, Corporate Manual, Cambridge Memorial Hospital, September 2009.

Accessibility Service Animals, St. Thomas Elgin General Hospital, September 2009.

St. Thomas Elgin General Hospital Access Service Animals