

Children's Mental Health Services
Policies and Procedures Manual

Category:

Client Services

Subject:

Accessibility Policy

Policy Number: **2-10-040**

CCA Standard(s):

Approved:

Revised: November 19, 2014

Policy:

In fulfilling our mission CMHS strives at all times to provide its goods and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. We are also committed to giving people with disabilities the same opportunity to access our goods and services and allowing them to integrate and benefit from those same services, in the same place and in a similar way as other clients.

The Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001, the term “disability” states:

1. 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, or
2. A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
3. A learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
4. A mental disorder, or
5. An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997; (“handicap”).

Procedure:

Providing Goods and Services to People with Disabilities

CMHS is committed to excellence in serving all clients including people with disabilities and will carry out its functions and responsibilities in the following areas:

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Procedure continued:

1. Communication

We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that takes into account their disability. We will ensure that our website and brochures are written in plain English.

We will train staff who communicate with clients on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities through a web based tool.

2. Telephone Services

We are committed to providing full accessible telephone service to our clients.

We will train staff to communicate with clients over the telephone in clear and plain language and to speak clearly and slowly.

We will offer to communicate with clients by email if telephone communication is not suitable to their communication needs or is not available.

3. Assistive Devices

We are committed to serving people with disabilities who use assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from our goods and services.

We will ensure that our staff are trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by clients with disabilities while accessing our goods and services.

We will also ensure that staff know how to use the assistive devices available on our premises for clients. The only one currently is the wheelchair access buttons at each site.

4. Use of Service Animals and Support Persons

We are committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal.

We will ensure that all staff, students and others dealing with the public are properly trained in how to interact with people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal.

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Procedure continued:

We are committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person. Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to enter any CMHS facility with his or her support person. At no time will a person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person be prevented from having access to his or her support person while on our premises.

5. Notice of Temporary Disruption

CMHS will provide clients with notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption of any of its facilities or to services usually used by people with disabilities. This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

The notice will be posted at all public entrances and reception areas on the premises. In addition, the telephone message at each site will indicate the temporary service disruption.

6. Training for Staff

CMHS will provide training to all employees, students and any others who deal with the public or other third parties on the premises.

7. Feedback Process

The ultimate goal of CMHS is to meet and surpass client expectations while serving clients with disabilities. Comments on our services regarding how well those expectations are being met are solicited, welcomed and appreciated.

Feedback regarding the way C.M.H.S. provides goods and services to people with disabilities can be made verbally in person, or by completing the feedback form included with this document and sent by mail, facsimile or regular mail. All feedback will be directed to the Executive Director, or his designate. Clients can expect to hear back within ten business days.

Complaints will be addressed according to procedures already established in CMHS complaint management policies and procedures.

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Statement of Organizational Commitment
The Integrated Accessibility Standards

Policy:

1. Under the AODA, Ontario Regulation 191/11, entitled, Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, the "Integrated Regulation" came into force July 1, 2011. The regulation establishes accessibility standards for information and communication, employment, and transportation. Children's Mental Health Services included in the regulation's definition of an "obligated organization" and must comply with the phased-in requirements of the regulation beginning January 1, 2014.
2. Children's Mental Health Services is committed to working towards being compliant with all the applicable standards under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). The following are the accessibility standards requirement applicable to Children's Mental Health Services.

Customer Service, Information and Communications and Employment

3. Children's Mental Health Services recognizes the history of discrimination against persons with disabilities in Ontario and the fundamental importance of developing, implementing and enforcing standards in a timely manner in order to achieve accessibility of Ontarians with disabilities.
4. Children's Mental Health Services is committed to the principles of independence, dignity, integration, and equality of opportunity described in the AODA and to meeting the needs of people with disabilities, in a timely manner, through the implementation of this policy.
5. Children's Mental Health Services is committed to establishing, maintaining and implementing policies as well as associated practices and procedures in the Integrated Regulation, specifically in the areas of information and communications and employment, and to meet the accessibility needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner.
6. Children's Mental Health Services is committed to excellence in serving all of our clients, including people with disabilities. When providing information to, or communicating with, a person with a disability, we will provide the information and communication in a manner that takes into account the person's disability.
7. Children's Mental Health Services is committed to ongoing improvements to accessibility in its premises and facilities as required by law, as well as to the services offered to clients, employees, students and members of the general public.
8. Children's Mental Health Services is committed to promoting values that support relationships between people with disabilities and Children's Mental Health Services.

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Statement of Organizational Commitment
The Integrated Accessibility Standards

Policy continued:

9. Children's Mental Health Services is committed to the establishment, implementation, maintenance, and documentation of a multi-year accessibility plan, which outlines the organization's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet its requirements under the Integrated Regulation.
10. Children's Mental Health Services is committed to the training of all employees, students, persons who deal with clients and the public on Children's Mental Health Services behalf, and persons participating in the developments and approval of Children's Mental Health Services policies, practices and procedures on the requirements under the Integrated Regulation and the Ontario Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities.
11. Children's Mental Health Services is committed to implementing specific requirements, policies, and practices and procedures, and a multi-year plan under the Standards for Information & Communications and Employment.

Purpose:

1. The purpose of this Policy is to create a statement of commitment (policy) that provides a framework within which accessibility plans and initiatives are to be created in order to move Children's Mental Health Services towards the goal of improved accessibility for people with disabilities. Children's Mental Health Services endeavours to provide accessibility and accommodation as prescribed in the AODA.
2. The commitments in this policy are intended to ensure that accessibility remains a priority in Children's Mental Health Services decision making process and will serve to assist in ensuring that decisions improve accessibility and do not inadvertently create barriers.

Scope:

1. This policy applies to Children's Mental Health Services clients, employees, students, applicants for employment with Children's Mental Health Services who may require employment accommodation through the recruitment, assessment, selection, and hiring process, visitors, contractors and subcontractors engaged by Children's Mental Health Services and any other third party providing goods, services, or facilities on Children's Mental Health Services behalf.

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Responsibility:

1. It is the responsibility of the Executive Director to ensure the application of this policy and that Children's Mental Health Services achieves compliance with the law and creates an environment that provides the widest feasible scope of access, which is the right or opportunity to reach, use or participate in the organization's systems, facilities and services.
2. Managers are responsible for ensuring that all employees follow the guidelines set out in this policy.
3. Each manager is responsible to ensure all employees are trained under the Accessibility Regulations and Standards under the AODA, the Human Rights Code and all related policies, practices and procedures.
4. All employees, volunteers, contractors and subcontractors, any other person acting on behalf of Children's Mental Health Services, and persons involved in the creation of Children's Mental Health Services policies are responsible for adhering to and following the commitments set out in this policy.

Definitions:

1. "Accessible formats" may include, but are not limited to, large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, Braille, and other formats usable by persons with disabilities.
2. "Accommodation" means the special arrangements made or assistance provided so that persons with disabilities can participate in the experiences available to persons without disabilities. Accommodation will vary depending on the person's unique needs.
3. "Communication supports" may include, but are not limited to, captioning, alternative and augmentative communication supports, plain language, sign language, and other supports that facilitate effective communication.
4. "Communications" means the interaction between two or more persons or entities, or any combination of them, where information is provided, sent, or received.
5. "Dignity" means service is provided in a way that allows the individual to maintain self-respect and the respect of other persons.
6. "Equal opportunity" means service is provided to individuals in such a way that they have an opportunity to access goods or services equal to that given to others.

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Definitions:

7. "Independence" means when a person is able to do things on their own without unnecessary help or interference from others.
8. "Information" includes data, facts and knowledge that exist in any format, including text, audio, digital or images, and that convey meaning.
9. "Integration" means service is provided in a way that allows the individual to benefit from equivalent services, in the same place, and in the same or similar way, as other individuals, unless an alternate measure is necessary to enable the individual to access goods or services.
10. "Reasonable efforts" means taking approaches that meet the required needs of the individual.

References:

Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07

Exemption from Reporting Requirements, Ontario Regulation 430/7

Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11

Procedures:

1. Children's Mental Health Services will monitor and evaluate accessibility initiatives and changes to applicable legislation and/or regulations. Changes to policies, plans and initiatives will be incorporated as required. Children's Mental Health Services will also report on performance in relation to established accessibility goals and targets.
2. Questions related to this policy, feedback or complaints should be forwarded to Children' Executive Director.