Providence Care is committed to ensuring timely equal access and participation for people with disabilities and treating those persons in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. The organization does so by removing and preventing barriers to accessibility and meeting our accessibility requirements under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* and Ontario’s accessibility laws.

Providence Care is committed to meeting its current and ongoing obligations under the *Ontario Human Rights Code* respecting non-discrimination.

Providence Care understands that obligations under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) and its accessibility standards do not substitute or limit its obligations under the *Ontario Human Rights Code* or obligations to people with disabilities under any other law.

Providence Care is committed to excellence in serving and providing goods, services or facilities to all customers including people with disabilities.

Our accessible customer service policies are consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity for people with disabilities.

**Training**

We are committed to training all staff and volunteers in accessible customer service, other Ontario accessibility standards and the aspects of the *Ontario Human Rights Code* that relate to persons with disabilities.

Training of our staff and volunteers on accessibility relates to their specific roles. We train every person as soon as practicable after being hired and provide training in respect of any changes to the policies.

Training includes:

- Purpose of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* and the requirements of the Customer Service Standards
- Our policies related to the Customer Service Standards
- How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities
- How to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person
- How to use the equipment or devices available on-site that may help with providing goods, services or facilities to people with disabilities.
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing our organization’s goods, services or facilities.

**Assistive Devices**

People with disabilities may use their personal assistive devices when accessing our goods, services or facilities. In cases where the assistive device presents a significant and unavoidable health or safety
concern or may not be permitted for other reasons, other measures will be used to ensure the person with a disability can access our goods, services or facilities.

Providence Care ensures that our staff are trained and familiar with various assistive devices we have on site or that we provide that may be used by customers with disabilities while accessing our goods, services or facilities.

**Communication**

Providence Care communicates with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. We will work with the person with disabilities to determine what method of communication works for them.

**Service Animals**

Providence Care welcomes people with disabilities and their service animals. Service animals are allowed on the parts of our premises that are open to the public and third parties.

When staff cannot easily identify that an animal is a service animal (e.g. identified through visual indicators, such as when it wears a harness or a vest, or when it helps the person perform certain tasks), our staff may ask for documentation (template, letter or form) from a regulated health professional that confirms the person needs the service animal for reasons relating to their disability.

**Support Persons**

A person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to have that person accompany them on our premises.

**Notice of Temporary Disruption**

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities for customers with disabilities, Providence Care will notify customers promptly. Communication will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated length of time, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

**Feedback Process**

Providence Care welcomes feedback on how we provide accessible customer service. Customer feedback helps us identify barriers and respond to concerns. Providence Care ensures our feedback process is accessible to people with disabilities by providing or arranging for accessible formats and communication supports, on request.

**Procurement**

Providence Care incorporates accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities. If it is not possible and practical to do so, we will provide an explanation upon request.
Information and Communications

Providence Care communicates with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. When asked, we will provide information about our organization and its services, including public safety information, in accessible formats or with communication supports:

a) In a timely manner, taking into account the person’s accessibility needs due to disability; and
b) At a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons.

We will consult with the person making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support. If the organization determines that information or communications are unconvertible, the organization will provide the requestor with:

a) An explanation as to why the information or communications are unconvertible; and
b) A summary of the unconvertible information or communications.

We will also meet internationally recognized Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA website requirements in accordance with Ontario’s accessibility laws.

Employment

Providence Care notifies staff, job applicants and the public that accommodations can be made during recruitment and hiring.

We consult with successful applicants and indicate that accommodations are available on request. When required, suitable accommodation for that person is arranged and provided.

We notify current staff that supports are available for those with disabilities. We provide updated information to staff whenever there is a change to existing policies on the provision of job accommodation that take into account staff’s accessibility needs due to a disability.

We will consult with the person making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication supports specifically for:

a) Information that is needed in order for them to perform their job; and
b) Information that is generally available to staff in the workplace

Where needed, Providence Care also provides customized emergency information to help staff with a disability during an emergency. With the staff’s consent, we will provide workplace emergency information to a designated person who is providing assistance to that employee during an emergency.

We will provide the information as soon as practicable after we become aware of the need for accommodation due to the staff’s disability.

We will review the individualized workplace emergency response information:

a) When the staff moves to a different location in the organization;
b) When the staff’s overall accommodations needs or plans are reviewed; and
c) When the employer reviews its general emergency response policies.

We have a written process to develop individual accommodation plans for staff.

We have a written process for staff who have been absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work.

Our performance management, career development and redeployment processes take into account the accessibility needs of all staff.

**Design of Public Spaces**

Providence Care will meet accessibility laws when building or making major changes to public spaces. Procedures are put in place to prevent service disruptions to the accessible parts of our public spaces.

**Transportation**

Providence Care meets accessibility laws when making our transportation services accessible.