



ADMINISTRATION & HUMAN RESOURCES POLICY & PROCEDURE MANUAL

POLICY # A70

SUBJECT: Accessibility
Sub Heading: Customer Service – Support Persons

PAGE NUMBER
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ISSUED BY: Accessibility Workgroup	ORIGINAL EFFECTIVE DATE: April 2010	
AUTHORIZED BY: Administrative Management Committee	DATE OF REVIEW January 2016	DATE OF REVISION:

Purpose:

To provide guidance with respect to the role of a support person within the facility, including the methods for providing equivalent support when necessary.

A support person is "a person who accompanies a person with disabilities in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or access to goods or services. A support person may be a paid support worker, a volunteer, a friend, or a family member. The support person does not need to have special training or qualifications. **A support person may be identified as such by the person with the disability and is not required to carry or produce documentation.**"

For the purpose of this procedure, "staff" include employees, physicians, volunteers, students and all others who have a working relationship with the hospital to provide services.

Responsibility:

- All staff


Equipment:

- N/A

Method:

Note: It is important to remember that the disability may not be visible and people are not required to disclose the nature of their disability.

- Prior to releasing any confidential information (such as personal health information) in the presence of the support person, obtain verbal consent from the person with the disability (or other form of consent if disability prevents verbal communication), and document the consent in the health record.
- Communicate directly to the person with the disability. Only communicate to the support person if instructed to do so by the person with the disability.
- Wherever possible, ensure support persons are allowed unlimited access to the patient. Support persons are not restricted to visiting hours.
- If unable to facilitate access for the support person, notify your direct supervisor. The direct supervisor, at their discretion, determines the level of access for the support person
If the support person is declined access, make provisions to provide equivalent support (as identified by the patient).

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Special Considerations:

Surgical Suites, procedure rooms, PACU and recovery areas:

- The physical, emotional, and psychological well-being of the patient is most important. When the patient identifies the need for a support person to be present, unlimited access to the support person will be facilitated until the induction of anaesthesia.
- When required, the support person will be provided with the necessary instruction, attire and supervision to maintain the integrity of the surgical or procedural area.
- Following anaesthesia the support person will be provided access to the PACU or recovery area.

References:

- [Ontario Regulation 429/07 Accessibility for Customer Service](#)