Policies, Practices and Procedures in Accordance with the Standards for Customer Service

This publication is available in alternate formats on request

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Introduction:

The College of Physiotherapists of Manitoba is committed to complying with the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service under *The Accessibility for Manitobans Act*. Our policies, practices and measures reflect the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity for people with disabilities.

If a barrier to accessing our goods or services cannot be removed, we seek to provide alternate ways to access the goods or services.

The following policy statements, organizational practices and measures are intended to meet the requirements of the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service.

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers and management of the College and are intended to benefit the full range of persons with disabilities. Whether an individual has a disability or not, all persons are treated with courtesy and respect when they interact with the College.

The College Commitment

The College of Physiotherapists of Manitoba supports the full integration and inclusion of persons with disabilities and supports the overall goal to make the province barrier-free.

Communication

Policy Statement:

The College of Physiotherapists of Manitoba (the College) meets the communication needs of our registrants or others.

Practices and Measures:

- To meet communication needs, when appropriate the College offers to communicate in different ways, such as writing things down, reading things out loud, and taking extra time to explain things.
- In the interest of the environment, the College is moving to an on-line application process. However, the College provides one-on-one assistance, either over the phone or in person, to access the information or to complete College forms.
- The College will also:
  - keep paper and pens available to write things down
  - offer a chair when longer conversations are needed
  - offer a quieter space
  - sit down to engage with someone using a wheelchair
- All of our publications include the statement:
  - "*This publication is available in alternate formats on request.*"
- The College will also specify how a person can request an alternate format.
- The College invites individuals to identify any accommodation needs before their arrival so that the College can better meet the service needs of all individuals. All requests for interaction with the College will include the following statement:
  - *The College is committed to providing service that is accessible to all individuals. Please identify any accommodation needs you may have prior to your scheduled interaction with the College.*
- The College will use signs and documents that are easy to read, including using larger fonts and colour contrast, and ensuring messages are not printed on images.
- The College will write signs and documents in plain language.

Assistive Devices

Policy Statement:

The College accommodates the use of assistive devices when registrants or others are accessing our services or facilities.

Practices and Measures:

- The College designed its public spaces with accessibility needs in mind
    - o Occupying a main floor office space
    - o Meeting rooms have wide aisles
    - o Wheelchair accessible washroom
    - o Wheelchair accessible main entrance
- Staff of the College does not touch or move registrants' or others' assistive devices without permission.
- The staff are trained in how to use the assistive devices that we provide, including:
    - o automatic doors
    - o doorbells
- In cases where the assistive device presents significant and unavoidable health or safety concerns, the staff will attempt to use other measures to ensure the person with disabilities can access our goods, services or facilities.

Support Persons

Policy Statement:

The College welcomes individuals requiring the assistance of a support person.

Practices and Measures:

- The College staff addresses the registrant or other, not the support person, unless requested by the registrant or other to do otherwise.
- The College makes space for support persons on-site and ensures registrants or others have access to their support persons at all times.
- All reasonable requests for the College to provide support persons to assist during interactions with the College are accommodated where possible

Service Animals

Policy Statement:

The College welcomes individuals using guide dogs or service animals in all public areas of the College and at all College-sponsored public events.

Practices and Measures:

- The College staff or volunteers:
    - treat a service animal as a working animal
    - do not distract a service animal from its job by petting, feeding or playing with it, unless given permission by the person with the service animal to do so
    - know how to identify a service animal by its harness or vest and by the assistance the animal is providing
- If there are concerns, we may ask if the animal has been trained to help a person with a disability-related need.
- The College will not inquire about the disability.
- The College will expect the person who is handling the service animal to maintain control of the animal physically or through voice, signal or other means.
- If the service animal is showing signs of not being controlled (i.e., by barking, whining or wandering), we may provide a warning to the handler to control the animal.
- If the service animal continues to misbehave, we may ask the handler to leave.

Maintain Accessibility Features

Policy Statement:

To ensure barrier-free access to our services or facilities the College will maintain our accessibility features so they can be used as intended.

Practices and Measures:

The College staff will:

- Organize our space so that there is room for people with wheelchairs, electric scooters and walkers.
- Keep hallways, aisles, entrance and reception areas, waiting rooms and meeting rooms clear of clutter.
- Keep our entrance area clear of ice and snow.
- Place standing signs out of the way to avoid tripping hazards.
- Use both audio and visual cues to inform customers it is their turn to be served.

Our accessibility features affected by this policy: hallways, aisles, entrance and reception areas, waiting rooms and meeting rooms, accessible washrooms, automatic doors, and doorbells.

Notice of Temporary Disruptions

Policy Statement:

The College will let the public know when and why an accessibility feature is temporarily unavailable, how long it will be unavailable, and other ways to access our services.

Practices and Measures:

- If one of our accessibility features becomes temporarily unavailable, staff will prepare and post a notice and/or announcement about the disruption, the reason for the disruption, how long it will last, and whether there are other ways we can provide access to our services (e.g., by using an alternate entrance).
- If requested, we work with the registrant or others to find other ways to provide services.
- We let the public know about disruptions in the following ways:
    - o posted on website, on social media, and/or in newsletters
    - o posted at our building entrance, service reception desk and/or in high traffic areas
    - o through employees, volunteers or management (in person, by phone or through recorded greetings)

A Feedback Process

Policy Statement:

The College welcomes and responds promptly to feedback we receive on the accessibility of our services.

Actions we take to respond to the feedback we receive will be documented, and that information will be available on request in a format that meets the individual's communication needs.

Practices and Measures:

- The College invites feedback in the following ways:
    - o Visit our reception or service desk, or contact us by phone, email, website or feedback form
- All feedback is directed to the Registrar/Executive Director, who determines what action, if any, should occur.
- If the feedback requires us to follow-up, the registrant or other is notified that the request is being reviewed and when they can expect a response.
- We let the registrant or other know what action we will take to address their feedback, if any.
- We respond to feedback in a way that meets the communication needs of the individual.

Training for College Employees

Policy Statements:

The College provides the required training on accessible customer service to employees. Employees are trained on:

- How to interact and communicate with people who face barriers to accessing goods and services, use assistive devices, are assisted by a support person and/or are assisted by a service animal.
- How to use any equipment or assistive devices that are available on-site.
- An overview of The Accessibility for Manitobans Act, The Human Rights Code (Manitoba), and the Customer Service Standard.
- Our organizational policies, practices and measures, including updates or changes.

Practices and Measures:

- The College trains new employees, volunteers and management within one month after hiring.
- We provide refresher training regularly, including updates to policies, practices and measures. Training is offered yearly.
- The Deputy Registrar will record who has taken training and when.
- Feedback on the accessibility of our goods and services is addressed in regular staff meetings.