

<b>Customer Service:</b> <b>Accessibility Standard for Customer Service Policy - Assistive Devices</b>	Approved by Board on December 13, 2011	October 2011	Page 1 of 3
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**Principle:**

The use of Assistive Devices by parents, clients and general public.

**Policy:**

Geneva Centre for Autism is committed to ensure that our staff are trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by parents, clients and general public with disabilities while accessing our services

**Procedure:**

The centre recognizes that people with disabilities achieve accessibility to the provision of services by the organization, consistent with the following principles:

1. The leadership team will ensure that staff are trained to support parents, clients and the general public who may use assistive devices while accessing our services.
2. Training is focused on how to interact with people using assistive devices rather than on the technical use of the assistive devices.

**Examples of personal assistive devices include:**

- Wheelchairs
- scooters
- walker
- amplification devices that boost sound for listeners who are hard-of-hearing without reducing background noise
- hearing aids
- oxygen tanks
- electronic notebooks or laptop computers
- personal data managers
- communication boards used to communicate using symbols, words or pictures
- speech-generating devices that “speak” when a symbol, word or picture is pressed

***Key Point to Remember: One should not touch or handle an assistive device without permission.***

<b>Customer Service:</b>  <b>Accessibility Standard for Customer Service Policy - Assistive Devices</b>	Approved by Board on December 13, 2011	October 2011	Page 2 of 3
---	--	--------------	-------------

**Communication Re: Use of Assistive Devices:**

1. *Assistive Devices Carried by Persons with Disabilities* – the executive leadership team will develop a centre wide message that will be communicated to all staff and clients that will indicate that all Geneva sites provide services that respect the independence and dignity of people with disabilities.
2. All sites post information in the front office/reception area that welcomes the use of assistive devices and encourages users to seek support from staff and volunteers as they require it.
3. *Assistive Devices/Services* - Information regarding moving people with assistive devices and making a call using the relay system are included below.

**Moving Personal Assistive Devices:**

If you have permission to move a person in a wheelchair remember to:

- wait for and follow the person’s instructions;
- confirm that the person is ready to move;
- describe what you are going to do before you do it;
- avoid uneven ground and objects that create bumpy and unsafe ride; and
- practice consideration and safety – do not leave the person in an awkward, dangerous or undignified position such as facing a wall or in the path of opening doors.

Do not move items or equipment, such as canes and walkers, out of the user’s reach.

Respect personal space. Do not lean over a person with a disability or lean on their assistive device.

Let the person know about accessible features in the immediate environment (automatic doors, accessible washrooms, etc.).

**How To Make A Call Using The Relay System:**

1. Phone the number (1-800-855-0511), and tell the operator your name, the name of the person you are calling, and the number you wish to reach.
2. The operator will make the call for you, and you speak to the operator as if you were talking directly to the person you are calling. For example, say “Hi, `How are you doing?” Do not say: “Tell him I said hello.” Remember to say “Go Ahead” when you finish speaking, so the person on the other end will know it is his or her turn to speak.

<b>Customer Service: Accessibility Standard for Customer Service Policy - Assistive Devices</b>	Approved by Board on December 13, 2011	October 2011	Page 3 of 3
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3. If you normally speak very quickly, the operator may ask you to speak slower so your message can be typed. There will be brief silences as the operator types to the TTY user and the user replies.
4. Operators will not betray confidences. They will not relay profanity, threats or criminal propositions, but will relay marriage proposals, banking and personal financial information and other personal (and even intimate) conversations.