PURPOSE:
To describe the way in which the Canadian Medical Association (CMA) provides goods and services, to persons with disabilities, in a way that respects a person’s dignity, independence, integration and equality of opportunity.

The CMA promotes an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect for the public, its members and employees. We believe it leads to a higher level of personal and corporate performance that ultimately delivers better outcomes for all. Our values are consistent with the principles outlined in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (otherwise known as AODA) to effectively provide services to people with disabilities. In keeping with our values, CMA aims at all times to provide goods and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities.

We honour a person’s dignity by ensuring we provide the same level of service, quality or convenience; regardless of their level or ability.

We honour a person’s wish for independence by respecting their choices and integrate our services to ensure persons with disabilities fully benefit from the same services, in the same place and in the same or similar way as other members.

We make efforts to ensure persons with disabilities have the same chances, options, benefits and results as others. We offer a variety of means to access our services to help ensure persons with disabilities do not have to make significantly more effort to access or obtain a service.

SCOPE:
As noted in our Code of Conduct, we promote an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect; this Policy is a reflection of how we do that while meeting the requirements of the Customer Service Standard1. This Policy is a subset of the Code of Conduct and applies to all employees dealing directly with our members, including former and prospective members, for the purposes of providing goods or services.

I. Definitions
   A. Assistive Devices: include a broad range of products such as wheelchairs, walkers, white canes, oxygen tanks, portable chalk boards and electronic communication devices that people may bring to our premises.
   B. Disability: includes physical, mental or developmental disabilities which may or may not be visible or permanent.1
   C. Feedback: comments regarding the manner in which we provide goods or services to persons with disabilities.

II. Roles and responsibilities
   A. The Vice-President, Corporate Services, or his or her delegate, is responsible for ensuring all persons with disabilities are treated in a manner that meets the expectations of the Policy. This responsibility includes:
      • Providing training to all applicable employees;
      • Ensuring the office building is an accessible structure, or that alternate locations are provided for meetings;
      • Reviewing all feedback provided about the way we provide goods and services;

1 Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07
• Providing notice of temporary disruptions of services; and
• Ensuring communication produced meet the expectations of this Policy.

B. The Vice-President, Legal, Governance and Meeting Services and Chief Privacy Officer, or his or her delegate, is responsible for creating, maintaining and reporting on this Policy.

III. Communications

CMA offers products and services through four channels of communication; these are: voice, mail, face-to-face and electronic. When communicating with a person with a disability, we will offer to communicate by the method best suited to their communication needs.

A. Advertising
• When creating or updating communications whose purpose is to offer goods or services, we document how they meet the requirements of this Policy.
• The format in which they are produced may dictate how flexible the communications can be. In cases where the communication cannot be offered in an alternate format, we document how persons with disabilities can obtain the information through an alternate channel.

B. Telephone Services
• Where service by telephone is not accessible for persons with disabilities, we offer alternate channels such as a TTY line or face-to-face meeting.

C. Assistive Devices
• We will allow - (as technology permits) individuals with disabilities the use of their assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from our services. Where an individual with a disability is unable to access our services through the use of their own personal assistive device, we will assess service delivery and potential service options to meet the needs of the individual.

IV. Use of service animals and support persons

A. Persons with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal will be permitted to enter parts of our premises that are common areas and to keep the animal with them, unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law or for any other reason (health of the occupants) from the premises. If the animal is legally excluded from some parts of the premises, alternative measures to enable the person to obtain, use or benefit from its services will be made available.

B. A person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to enter CMA’s premises together with the support person and will not be prevented from having access to the support person while on our premises.

V. Feedback

A. Feedback regarding the way the CMA provides goods and services to people with disabilities can be made through the Member Service Centre or any communication vehicle of choice in which CMA is engaged.

B. All feedback submitted to the CMA addressing issues or concerns is treated as a complaint and is dealt with through our standard complaint procedures as outlined in the Code of Conduct and the CMA’s Respectful Workplace policy.

C. Information about how to give feedback is maintained on our internal and external websites.
VI. Notice of temporary disruption

A. CMA will provide notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or 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 on the premises, where appropriate in the circumstances.

B. Where the website is not working notification is posted to the website as soon as possible.

C. Where the phone lines are not working the calls are re-routed or a message is engaged to inform the caller of the disruption.

VII. Training

A. All CMA staff is trained on the provision of services to persons with disabilities on an annual basis. Training is updated as required.

B. Training includes informing employees of their responsibility to meet the expectations of this policy and will include:
   - Purpose and requirements of Act
   - Tips for serving persons with disabilities
   - Definitions of Assistive devices, Support persons and Service animals
   - Feedback mechanism
   - Link to resources and more detailed courses

VIII. Enforcement

A breach of this Policy is considered a breach of the Code of Conduct.

IX. Exceptions

Exceptions to this Policy may only be granted by the Vice-President, Corporate Services or his or her delegate.

X. Record retention

Unless otherwise stated, records are kept for 7 years from the date of publication.

XI. Impacting Regulations

Canadian Human Rights Act (R.S.C., 1985, c. H-6)
Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005
Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07

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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,
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, or,
4) A mental disorder.
5) The definition includes disabilities of different severity, visible as well as non-visible disabilities, and disabilities the effects of which may come and go.