

# **Accessible Customer Service**

Sioux Lookout Meno Ya  
Win Health Centre



# Training Agenda

- How to interact with people with various disabilities (best practices)
- Understand the purpose of the Act (AODA)
- What to do with feedback
- Questions and Answers

A decorative graphic on the left side of the slide, consisting of a light green L-shaped corner at the top left and a dark blue horizontal bar with rounded ends extending across the width of the slide.

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- Could you read this as well as the last slide

# Best Practices

## Physical disabilities

- Speech Impairments
- Mental health disabilities
- Intellectual or developmental disabilities
- Deafness/hearing loss
- Blindness/vision loss

# Physical Disabilities

- Speak normally and directly to your customer, do not speak to their support person
- Ask before you help
- Don't touch any assistive devices

# Speech Impairments

- Just because a person has one disability doesn't mean that they have another. For example, if a customer has difficult speaking, don't assume they have an intellectual disability
- If you don't understand, ask the customer to repeat the information
- Patience, respect and a willingness to find a way to communicate are your best procedures

# Mental Health Disabilities

- Treat people with a mental health disability with the same respect and consideration you have for everyone else
- Be confident and reassuring and listen to your customers
- If someone appears to be in a crisis, ask them to tell you the best way to help

# Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities

- Don't assume what a person can or cannot do
- Use simple words and short sentences
- Make sure your customer understands what you've said.
- If you can't understand, don't pretend, just ask again.

# Deafness/Hearing Loss

- Always ask how you can help, don't shout
- Look at and speak directly to your customer.
- If necessary, ask if another method of communicating would be easier, for example, a pen and paper
- Don't put your hands in front of you mouth when speaking
- Be patient

# Visual Impairments

- Identify yourself when you approach your customer and speak directly to them.
- Speak normally and clearly
- Never touch your customer without asking permission
- If you offer assistance, wait until you receive permission
- Offer your elbow to guide the person and walk slowly
- Don't touch service animal – they are working
- Don't walk away without saying goodbye

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  - How did you like this slide??

# Brainstorm

List some barriers in your work location that would prevent a person with a disability from accessing your services.

If this program is being done on line then please discuss this with your peers in your department

# Who is a person with a disability?

The definition of disability under the AODA is the same as the definition of disability in the Ontario Human Rights Code. This is the definition of disability that applies to the Customer Service Standard.

“Disability” means:

- a) 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, including diabetes, epilepsy, 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.

# Who is a person with a disability?

- b) A condition of mental impairment of developmental disability
- c) A learning disability or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language or,
- d) A mental disorder or,
- e) An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

This definition includes disabilities of different severity, visible as well as non-visible, and disabilities of which the effects may come and go.

# The Purpose

Ontario's Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) requires all service providers, including health care institutions, to remove barriers faced by people with disabilities.

The AODA legislates the creation of accessible standards in five areas of daily living:

- Customer Service
- Transportation
- Information and Communications
- Employment
- Built Environment

Meeting the requirements of the Customer Service Standard is simply about providing good customer service. It's about doing the right things and educating staff on your customer service standards. It's an opportunity to review your policies, practices and standards to make sure everyone in your organization is doing the right thing.

# Accessibility: An Issue of Growing Importance

- According to Statistics Canada, approximately 13.5 per cent (1.5 million) Ontarians have a disability. \*
- This number is predicted to grow to approx. 20% within 20 years.\*
- Ontarians with disabilities have untapped potential to contribute to labour market. Unemployment rate of Ontarians with disabilities is 5 times higher (26%) than unemployment rate of Ontarians without a disability (5%)

Source: \*Statistics Canada's Participation and Activity Limitation Survey (PALS) 2001

# Ontarians with a Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA)

Under the Human Right Code there is a duty to accommodate

Purpose of ODA: To improve opportunities for people with disabilities by identifying and removing barriers to full participation

Under the ODA, each organization must:

- Develop annual accessibility plans
- Consult with people with disabilities to develop plan
- Make plans available to the public
- Have an Accessibility Advisory Committee

# The AODA Vision...

## An Accessible Ontario by 2025

- Fundamental comprehensive change to ensure accessible customer service, transportation, information and communications, buildings, and employment for people with disabilities
- Meet increased demand of aging population – all of us will experience some form of disability throughout our lives
- Inform and change attitudes, values and behaviour towards accessibility

# An Innovative Approach to Standards Development

**Standards development committees are being established to address barriers to accessibility that have a major impact on daily living for people with disabilities.**

The approach:

**Common standards** may apply broadly to all persons and organizations in Ontario and may address barriers common to all sectors. Five common standards are to be developed:

- **Customer Service** – Service delivery to the public. Could include business practices and employee training.
- **Built Environment** – Access to, from and within buildings and outdoor spaces. Could include counter heights, aisle/door widths, parking and signs, as well as pedestrian access routes and signal systems.
- **Employment** – Hiring and retaining employees. Could include employment practices, policies and processes such as job advertisements and interviewing.
- **Information & Communications** – Information processing and communication. Could include publications, software applications and websites.
- **Transportation**

**Sector-specific standards:** An accessible transportation standard is being developed that is unique to this sector.

# Customer Service Standard

This standard was approved July 2007

It requires:

- Accessible customer service policy, procedures and practices
- Staff training (big one)
- A feedback method
- Alternate communication methods
- Notices of service disruption

# Required Policies, Practices and Procedures

Policy governing the provision of goods and services to people with disabilities

- Use of assistive devices
- Service animals
- Support person
- Documented process for notice of service disruption
- Training
- Records of training
- Documented process for feedback

# Customer Service

General Principles and  
Standards



# Everyone.....

- In the organization that provides service for our customers must understand their role and responsibility in customer service

# Customer Service

- How do you see yourself????



# What is not good customer service?

- Rudeness (verbal or non verbal )
- Statements like “ not my job”, why should I have to do that , they don't
- Not acknowledging the person right away
- Lack of manners

# Serve.....

- Every customer or person that you deal with as you would like to be treated
- Make customers feel comfortable, valued, respected, appreciated and with a sense of dignity

# Serve

- do people jump through attention and understand



# Understanding

- Did you understand that last slide?
- Was communication clear?
- Is there any thing in your department that needs to be reviewed ....policies procedures, pamphlets, language
- Make a list and discuss with your Manager
- Thank you, input on this



for your

# ACTIVITY

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on line activities. **Thank you** for participating in those  
workshop. Please continue with the

# Perception.....

- Is reality in the minds of every customer when it comes to experiencing service satisfaction
- Customers may not always be right, but they shouldn't be made to feel wrong

# Individual.....

- Every customer is an individual and service must be tailored to meet their needs (within reasonable guidelines)

# Training.....

- Staff training in customer service must happen in every department
- Staff training must establish a culture of high quality service throughout the organization
- This training can be done through workshops, role playing, mentoring and everyday actions

# Empowerment .....

- Staff must listen and respond promptly
- Staff must be **empowered** to deal with complaints, issues and situations or know who can solve the problem and communicate that to the customer
- Staff should be encouraged to show personal initiative and creative ways of serving customers....within reasonable guidelines and resources

# Communication .....

- Good, clear communication helps to demonstrate good customer service
- What does the customer want, when do they want it, how are we going to give it, who is involved

# Courtesy.....

- Demonstrate good manners and common courtesy
- Smile whether in person or on the phone
- Remember to say “Please and thank you”
- Remember good manners will often diffuse a situation or give a customer a positive experience

# Teamwork.....

- Teamwork is essential to good customer service
- Communication and cooperation between departments, co-workers and customers is often the foundation of good teamwork for the organization

# Diversity

- Acknowledging culture differences
- Eg... values, language, literacy, history
- Using culture differences as a learning opportunity for customer service

# Pieces of the Puzzle



# Quality.....

- Customers expect quality whether it's service (timeliness), friendliness, communication, meeting goals or expectations of what we offer
- Staff need to know what we can give and also what customers are expecting

# Follow – up.....

- We must do what we say we are going to do
- Communication is complete
- Issues are resolved
- Customer has a memorable and positive experience
- Follow up is both internal and external

\*\*Review complaint/appeal policy

# Evaluate.....

- Evaluate service through feedback from your customers both internally and externally



# Exceed.....

- Exceed the customers expectations
- Continue to raise the bar on customer service
- Aim for great service the first time
- Ask if they need anything else....

# What is Accessible Customer Service?

- Most people with disabilities do not use wheelchairs
- Barriers to service are generally simple and low cost
- Be open to serving the public in a variety of ways
- Reduce jargon and communicate clearly
- Ask if you can help

**Thank you.....**

