Reference/Standard:	**Number**: HW.1.40	**Effective Date**: December 2009 **Revision Date**:
Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005 Ontario Regulation 429/07	**Approval**: CEO	

USE OF SUPPORT PERSONS, SERVICE ANIMALS AND ASSISTIVE DEVICES

Standard Statement:

The Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Health Centre is committed to providing accessible health care services to all individuals. Our vision, mission and values guide our strategic plan to include inclusiveness/accessibility as one of our success factors. We will strive to meet or exceed the legislative requirements of the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2001*, the *Accessibility for Ontarian s with Disabilities Act 2005* and any subsequent legislation to achieve a fully accessible Ontario by 2025.

Policy

SLMHC is committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person or a service animal, as well as those individuals who use assistive devices.

Support Persons

1. A support person is defined as another person who accompanies a person with a disability in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or accessing goods and services.
2. If a person with a disability is accompanied by a support person, the provider of goods and service shall ensure that both persons are permitted to enter the premises together and that the person with the disability is not prevented from having access to the support person while on the premises.
3. Staff and service providers will address the person accessing the service directly and will refrain from addressing the support person for any reason unless directed to do so by the person with a disability.
4. The provider of goods and services may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person when on the premises, but only if a support person is necessary to protect the health and safety of the person with a disability or the health and safety of others on the premises.
5. In situations where SLMHC has obligations under privacy laws or has issues of confidentiality or professional obligations, a support person may be requested to agree to requirements of service just as the person with a disability does.
6. If an amount is payable by a support person for admission to the premises or in connection with a support person's presence at the premises, SLMHC shall ensure that notice is given in advance about the amount, if any, payable in respect of the support person on SLMHC's website and in any other manner deemed appropriate.

Service Animals

1. If a person with a disability is accompanied by a guide dog or other service animal, the provider shall ensure that the person is permitted to enter the premises with the animal unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law from the premises.
2. Where a service animal is excluded by law, SLMHC will ensure that other measures are available to enable the person with a disability to obtain, use and benefit from the hospital's goods and services.
3. Service animal access will be limited to areas where public normally access.
4. The animal must be in the control and care of the individual for whom the support animal services. The person accompanied by the support animal will endeavour to manage all the bodily functions of that animal.
5. The support animal is to be clean, of good health and not posing an infection control risk.
6. Staff and volunteers are not to interact with the support animal as this may distract the animal from the performance of support duties.
7. Staff and others who have allergies to the support animal will be relocated/reassigned to an area limiting exposure to the allergen. All possible interventions shall be undertaken to limit exposure to allergens.
8. It is noted that not all support animals are guide dogs. Under the legislation, "an animal is a support animal for a person with a disability if the person provides a letter from a physician or a nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability". When there are concerns around the safety of or the animal is disruptive to the service provision to others, SLMHC has the right to request that the person produce such a document to qualify the animal as a service animal. This action is reserved for situations of grave concern and is not a routine practice.

Assistive Devices

SLMHC is committed to serving people with disabilities who use assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from our goods and services. SLMHC ensures that staff are trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by customers with disabilities while accessing our services.

During staff training, appropriate staff will be trained on how to use the following assistive devices:

- wheelchairs
- walkers
- crutches

Authorized Signature _____