

## ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

### Statement of Commitment

LaPointe-Fisher Nursing Home (including Fairfield Park; Brouillette Manor and LaPointe-Fisher) is committed to making its Long-Term Care Homes accessible to individuals with disabilities by compassionately and safely caring for our residents and staff and meeting or exceeding the standards set out in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.

### Background

In 2005, the Government of Ontario passed the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 with the goal to make Ontario accessible by 2025.

Accessibility standards are policies, practices or other requirements that businesses and organizations in Ontario need to implement and follow to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities so they will have more opportunities to participate in everyday life.

### The Accessibility Standards under the Act are:

- **Customer Service** – Provide customer service to people with disabilities in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities;
- **Information and Communications** – Create, provide and receive information and communications in an accessible format, in a timely manner that takes into account the person's accessibility needs due to disability and at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons;
- **Employment** – Incorporate accessibility practices across all stages of employment including recruitment, selection and supporting regional employees with disabilities;
- **Transportation** – Make it easier to move around the facilities by considering the accessibility needs of people with disabilities;
- **Built Environment** – Make facilities and outside property more accessible to people with disabilities.

### Definitions

“Assistive device” means a technical aid, communication device or other instrument that is used to maintain or improve the functional abilities of people with disabilities such as a wheelchair, walker or a personal device that might assist in hearing, seeing, communicating, moving, breathing, remembering and/or reading.

“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, 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,
- b) a condition of mental impairment or a 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,
- 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*;

“Customer” means any member of the public who has access to an organization’s goods, services or premises.

“Blind person” means a person who because of blindness is dependent on a guide dog or white cane.

“Guide dog” means a dog trained as a guide for a blind person and having the qualifications prescribed by the regulations.

“Service animal” – an animal can be a service animal if:

- a) the animal can be readily identified as one that is being used by the person for reasons relating to the person’s disability, as a result of visual indicators such as the vest or harness worn by the animal; or
- b) the person provides documentation from a regulated health professional confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability

“Support person” means, in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies the person with a disability in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods, services or facilities;

“Accessible formats” may include, but are not limited to, large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, braille and other formats usable by persons with disabilities;

“Accessible plan” means a plan that identifies and removes barriers to allow people with disabilities to access the services, policies, procedures and practices available within the organization.

“Accessibility standard” means the rule under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) that persons and organizations shall follow to identify, remove and prevent barriers to accessibility of services, policies, procedures and practices.

“Web Content Accessibility Guidelines” means the World Wide Web Consortium Recommendation, dated December 2008, entitled “Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0”;

“Web page” means a non-embedded resource obtained from a single Uniform Resource Identifier (URI) using Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP) and any other resources that are used in the rendering or intended to be rendered together with it by a user agent.

“Communications” refers to the interaction between two or more people or entities when information is provided, sent or received.

“Communication supports” may include, but are not limited to, captioning, alternative and augmentative communication supports, plain language, sign language and other supports that facilitate effective communications;

“conversion ready” means an electronic or digital format that facilitates conversion into an accessible format.

“Information” includes data, facts and knowledge that exists in any format, including text, audio, digital or images, and that conveys meaning.

“As soon as practicable” means as soon as possible given all of the circumstances after a person with a disability asks for the information in an accessible format or with communication supports.

## **POLICY**

This policy was developed to meet the requirements of Accessibility of Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, Integrated Accessibility Standards 191/11 and the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service 429/07.

All programs, facilities, goods and services provided by LaPointe-Fisher Nursing Home, Limited and its owned and managed Homes shall follow the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity.

## **PURPOSE**

The policy applies to all staff who deal with the public or other third parties, as well as persons involved in developing the organization’s policies, procedures and practices pertaining to the provision of goods and services to the public or other third parties, whether they do so as employees, contractors, volunteers, agents or otherwise. This policy also applies to physicians, volunteers, students and all others who have a working relationship with the Homes and the working relationship is consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity.

## **GUIDELINES**

### **The Provision of Goods and Services to Persons with Disabilities**

LaPointe-Fisher Nursing Home, Limited and its subsidiaries will ensure that all persons receive the same value and quality and will allow persons with disabilities to do things in their own ways, at their own

pace as long as this does not present a safety risk. The Homes will consider the individual needs of the persons requiring the goods and services, will communicate with them in a manner that considers the person's disability, will use alternative methods when possible, to ensure they have access to the same services, in the same place and in the same manner.

### **Assistive Devices**

Persons with disabilities may use their own personal assistive devices or technologies in an unrestricted manner in all areas of the building to which they have access, except when subject to resident safety and/or business integrity. We will ensure that our staff are trained and familiar with various assistive devices we have on site or we provide that may be used by customers with disabilities while accessing our goods and services.

### **Guide Dogs, Service Animals and Service Dogs**

A person with a disability that is accompanied by a service animal, guide dog or service dog will be allowed access to premises that are opened to public. Only a service dog or guide dog will be allowed in a food service area. Other types of service animals are not allowed into food service areas due to the Health Protection and Promotion Act, O. Reg. 562, s. 60.

If the service animal is excluded by law, LaPointe-Fisher Nursing Home, Limited will provide alternative solutions, such as offering the guidance of an employee while securing the service animal in a safe location.

### **Support Persons**

A person with disabilities who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to have that person accompany them on our premises. A support person may be a paid professional, a volunteer, family member or friend of the person with a disability. The Homes will make every reasonable effort to allow the person with disabilities and the support person to sit next to each other. Where privacy is an issue, consent will be obtained from the person, prior to any conversation where confidential information might be discussed.

### **Notice of Temporary Disruption**

Reasonable efforts will be made to provide advance notice of any disruption. In emergency situations, advance notice may not be possible. Notifications will include the subject of disruption, the reason and anticipated duration of the disruption along with a description of alternative services or options. LaPointe-Fisher Nursing Home, Limited and its subsidiaries will use any method that may be reasonable

under the circumstances, such as: posting notices in conspicuous places, contacting visitors by phone and by email, or when they approach the home.

### **Emergency Information**

The Homes will make available the emergency procedures, plans or public safety information in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports, as soon as practicable and upon request. This may include evacuation procedures and floor plans, information about alarms or information about other incidents that may threaten life, property, operations or the environment.

The Homes will provide individualized emergency response information to employees who have a disability, if the disability is known to the employer and there is a need for such individualized information. The information required will be provided as soon as practicable after the employer becomes aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability.

### **Training**

The Homes will ensure that all persons to whom this policy applies receive training as required by applicable legislation. This training will be provided as soon as practicable following a new employee commencing employment with the organization.

Training will include the following:

- The purposes of applicable law - including the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the customer service standard
- How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities
- How to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person
- How to use the equipment or devices available at the Homes that may help with the provision of services to persons with disabilities.
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing the Homes' goods and services
- Policies, practices and procedures relating to the customer service standard

Applicable staff will be trained on policies, practices and procedures that affect the way goods and services are provided to people with disabilities. Staff will also be trained on an ongoing basis when changes are made to these policies, practices and procedures.

## **Feedback**

Comments on our services are welcome and appreciated. Feedback can be provided using the processes in place (speak directly with the Administrator, complete surveys, or refer to the Home's formal Complaint Procedure). The organization will ensure that the processes are accessible to persons with disabilities and will provide, upon request, accessible formats and communication supports.

## **Employment**

LaPointe-Fisher Nursing Home, Limited and its subsidiaries, will create a working environment that respects the requirements set out in the Employment Standards Act and Ontario Human Rights Code to accommodate people with disabilities.

This will apply to recruitment policies, procedures and processes, performance management, return to work, redeployment, career development and individual accommodation plans.

## **Organizational Practices**

1. LaPointe-Fisher Nursing Home, Limited will develop, implement and maintain an Accessibility Plan that outlines the company's strategy to prevent and remove barriers from its workplace and to improve opportunities for persons with disabilities. The Accessibility Plan will be reviewed and updated at least once every five years, and will be posted on the company's website. Upon request, the organization will provide a copy of the Accessibility Plan in an accessible format.
2. LaPointe Fisher Nursing Home, Limited will ensure that our Internet websites, including web content, conform to the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, at Level AA except where this is impracticable.
3. LaPointe-Fisher Nursing Home, Limited will comply with the Built Environment Standards when undertaking new construction and redevelopment of public spaces.
4. LaPointe-Fisher Nursing Home, Limited will ensure documents that detail the Organization's accessibility policies and procedures will be made available upon request to persons with disabilities, in a format that considers their disability.

## **Continuous Quality Improvement**

The program will be reviewed every 5 years for the content and effectiveness. This will include:

- Policies and Procedures
- Accessibility Plan
- Feedback (Resident/Employee Survey)

## References

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/05a11#BK0>

Integrated Accessibility Standards, O.Reg 191/11

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/110191>

Blind Person's Rights Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. B7

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90b07>

UniversalCare – Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Council – HR 01-01-95- CQI 01-21

<https://www.universalcareinc.ca/public/files/UniversalCareAccessibility.pdf>

PrimaCare Living Solutions – Accessible Customer Service Policy | 01-47

<https://www.primacareliving.com/accessibility-policy>