



CATEGORY: Human Resources POLICY NO. : DRFMC 012

SUBJECT: **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities:** Pages: 2
Service Animals & Support Persons

Version: 1.0

APPROVED BY: Lead Physician, Dr. Tom Tobin DATE: November 28, 2011
Clinic Operations Manager, Kevin McGuirk

SERVICE ANIMALS:

Service animals such as guide dogs, offer independence and security to many people with various disabilities. Some laws generally prohibit animals in certain areas ie. food preparation areas, however service animals are permitted in most public situations.

DRFMC will ensure that a person with a disability that is accompanied by a guide dog or other service animal is permitted to enter the Clinic with the animal and to keep the animal with him/her unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law. Where a service animal is excluded by law, DRFMC will ensure that other measures are available to enable the person with a disability to obtain, use and benefit from the services provided by the Clinic. Areas where service animals are restricted will be identified.

Where a animal is excluded by law from the Clinic premises, the reason why shall be explained to the disabled person. Steps will be taken to make sure other arrangements can be made.

DRFMC Infection Control requirements include:

- the animal, including collar, leash and smock must be clean
- members of the public are discouraged from touching service animals
- the handler/owner is responsible for any clean-up required due to the animal as well as practice proper hand hygiene practices
- the animal must be fit and healthy to enter the Clinic
- the animal should be up to date with all vaccinations

- the animal must remain on a leash
- the animal will not be allowed into sterile areas

If a service animal is unruly or disruptive an employee of the Clinic may ask the person with the disability to remove the animal from the area or refuse service. Other reasonable arrangements will be explored to assist the disabled person receive service(s).

SUPPORT PERSONS:

Support persons assist people with disabilities in a variety of ways, by assisting with communication and/or providing physical assistance. A support person may also be a friend or relative that will assist and support the patient/client.

When a person with a disability is accompanied by a support person, DRFMC will ensure that both persons are permitted access to the Clinic, and that the disabled person is not prevented access to the support person. DRFMC may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person while in the facility, 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 in the facility.

- persons with disabilities may be accompanied by their support person while accessing Clinic services.
- When a support person is involved, it is important to clearly identify the role of the support person when a discussion involving personal and confidential information, to ensure the Clinic Privacy Policy is not contravened.
- Every employee will use reasonable efforts to allow persons with disabilities to use their own assistive devices to access Clinic services.
- Other reasonable arrangements to provide services will be explored with the assistance of the person with disability.