Hôpital général de Nipissing Ouest
West Nipissing General Hospital
725 ch. Coursol Rd. Sturgeon Fall, ON P2B 2Y6

POLICY & PROCEDURE

Subject: 100-129 Support Persons - AODA	**Policy NO:** 100-129
Department: Administration	**Original Date:** 2010-01-12
Approval: President & CEO (2026-11-02)	**Reviewed:** Quality & Risk Manager (2026-10-19)

PURPOSE

This policy has been established to fulfill the requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) and the Customer Service Standards contained in Ontario Regulation 191/11 (Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation), as amended.

POLICY STATEMENT

The WNGH is committed to the provision of accessible, safe and quality health care for persons with disabilities.

PROCEDURE

This policy applies to all employees, physicians, volunteers, students, contractors and any individuals or organizations acting on behalf of WNGH.

This policy applies whenever WNGH provides goods, services or facilities to patients, families, visitors or members of the public, including services provided on-site, virtually or through other service delivery methods.

1. A support person can be someone a patient chooses to help them during their care. This may include a family member, friend, caregiver, interpreter, or another person the patient trusts. A support person may assist with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs, or access to services.
2. A support person is not automatically authorized to receive personal health information or make health-care decisions on behalf of a patient. Such authority is determined in accordance with applicable legislation, including Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004 (PHIPA) and the Health Care Consent Act, 1996 (HCCA)
3. Patients may choose to have a support person accompany them during their care. WNGH will make every reasonable effort to accommodate this choice and will not prevent access to a support person unless a restriction is required by law or is necessary to address health, safety, privacy, infection prevention and control, or clinical-care requirements.
   If restrictions are necessary, staff will explain the reason and discuss available alternatives where possible.
4. WNGH may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person only after:
   a. Consulting with the person with a disability;
   b. Considering available evidence;

NOTE: This is a controlled document. Any documents in paper form must be used for reference purposes only. The online copy must be considered the current documentation.

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c. Determining that no other reasonable means are available to protect the health or safety of the individual or others.

Any decision to require a support person shall be documented.

5. Where WNGH requires a support person for health or safety reasons, any applicable admission fee shall not be charged to the support person.
6. WNGH shall follow its established procedure for assessing whether a support person is required for health or safety reasons, including consultation with the individual, consideration of available evidence and documentation of the decision.
7. In some cases, a support person may have to agree to rules or requirements that are specific to the kinds of goods or services that the WNGH provides.
8. Patients decide what personal health information they would like shared with their support person. A patient's consent is required before information is shared unless the disclosure is permitted or required by law.
9. Where personal health information may be disclosed in the presence of a support person, WNGH shall obtain the patient's consent, or the consent of the legally authorized substitute decision-maker, in accordance with PHIPA. A confidentiality agreement may be required where appropriate but does not replace the requirement for valid consent.
10. Personal health information shall be collected, used and disclosed in accordance with the Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004 (PHIPA), applicable WNGH policies and all other applicable legislation. Consent may be express or implied, where permitted by PHIPA, and may be withdrawn at any time.
11. WNGH recognizes that support persons play an important role in facilitating communication, decision-making support, access to care and patient safety. Requests for support persons shall be accommodated to the greatest extent possible while balancing infection prevention and control requirements, privacy obligations, patient preferences and operational considerations.
12. Service providers and others providing goods and services on behalf of the WNGH will adhere to these procedures and practices.

REFERENCES

- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)
- Ontario Regulation 191/11, Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR)
- Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004 (PHIPA)
- Ontario Human Rights Code
- Health Care Consent Act, 1996 (HCCA)