**DESIGN GUIDE - ACCESSIBLE WAITING ROOM**

*The access provisions of Premises Standards 2010 have been incorporated into NCC Volume 1 BCA, effective from 1 May 2011.*

*In all public buildings, access is required to and within all areas normally used by the occupants. Fit-out criteria for these spaces are not included in the BCA. Uninformed design of fit-out can render a space inaccessible, despite its compliance with the* [*BCA access provisions*](http://acumen.architecture.com.au/apps/notes/view/72)*. Inaccessible buildings and spaces are at risk to complaint under the DDAct.*

**1. APPLICATION**

Where any of the features listed below are provided in a waiting room, they should be accessible to all occupants.

**2. DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS**

*This Design Guide contains criteria for elements which are beyond the scope of the NCC and the Premises Standards. As far as possible it does not repeat the mandatory requirements of the NCC.*

* **Circulation space**

Provide circulation spaces to meet AS1428.1 around all furniture.

* **Waiting space**

Provide adequate space for the number of persons using the premises to be able to sit, park their walking frames, perambulators or wait in their wheelchairs without obstructing access for others.

* **Seating**

Provide seats and seating spaces for all customers/clients if waiting times are likely to be more than 10 minutes.

Space chairs 200mm clear of each other.

Select ergonomically-designed chairs with backrests and arms. Seat height of 450mm is generally suitable but heights of up to 520mm are preferred where a high proportion of elderly users is anticipated. Children and small people may, however, require seats as low as 350mm. Otherwise select seating to meet AS/NZS4688.2, 4688.3 and 4688.4 and AS1428.2.

Provide armrests to most seats. Armrests assist persons who are frail or have ambulant disability in getting in and out of the seat. Bench-type seating with armrests at the ends accommodate people of varying sizes.

Provide some bariatric seats with a seating space of 700mm-wide x 450mm-deep per person.

* **Wheelchair space**

Provide at least one wheelchair seating space. In larger waiting rooms allocate at least 10% of the number of seating spaces for wheelchairs, walking frames and perambulators, with a greater percentage in waiting rooms of premises providing services for children, health care or for a large number of wheelchair users.

Allow for groups of 2-wheelchair seating spaces between groups/rows of regular seats. A location at the end of a row of regular seats is suited for a single- wheelchair seating space. Such arrangement will enable two related wheelchair users to sit together or individual wheelchair users to sit next to their companion sitting in the regular seat.

Allow 850mm wide x 1300mm deep space for one wheelchair, 1700mm wide x 1300mm deep space for two wheelchairs, plus 1200mm wide circulation space in front of all wheelchair spaces.

* **Reception counter**

See Design Guide “Accessible Reception Counter’

* **Shelving for reading matter**

For side reach: 1350mm max high

For forward reach: 1120mm max high

* **Furniture and fittings**

Select and/or detail drinking fountains, chilled and boiling water dispensers, coffee or tea making machines, vending machines, taxi phone, public telephone, ATM for access by wheelchair users.

Meet AS1428.2-1992 Clause 22 for reach ranges and AS1428.1-2009 Figure 45 for location of controls and knee/toe clearance under fittings.

See Design Guides “Accessible Drinking Fountain” and “Accessible Tea Point”.

* **Other Features**

Consider provision of a hearing augmentation system at reception and information counters to assist communication with a person with hearing impairment where the customer is not screened from the service provider. The *SoundShuttle*, for example, is a free-standing unit with built-in induction loop and microphone that is now widely used at such reception and information counters.

Provision of a hearing augmentation system is mandatory when the customer is screened from the service provider.

Avoid screening wherever possible.

Provide glare free illumination of minimum 200 lux.

Ensure 30% minimum luminance contrast against the background for all fittings and controls.

Provide directional signage if toilets and other facilities are not immediately apparent from the Waiting Room.

**3. REFERENCES**

AS1428.1 – 2009 (Incorporating amendment No. 1 - 2010)

Design for Access and Mobility Part 1: General Requirements for Access – New Building Work

AS1428.2 – 1992

Design for Access and Mobility Part 2: Enhanced and Additional Requirements – Buildings and Facilities.

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