

# Tobacco Free Hospital Forum

What hospital employees are saying: those who are interested in quitting tobacco

Pocono Medical Center in East Stroudsburg. Michael Palys works in PMC's information systems department and has been smoking for 15 years. He has never tried to quit. "Today is actually my first day, so far so good," he said. And... Another employee said she has tried to quit several times. She hopes the smoking ban program will help her kick the habit for good. "I think it's a good idea for people to quit smoking because this is our earth and we need the fresh air," she said. Hospital Goes Smoke Free, WNEP 16 News Station, Thursday, February 1, 5:15 p.m. By Rosa Yum

HONESDALE — James Hockenbury can easily chew through a pack of gum in two days, with the help of his son snagging a few pieces. Wayne Memorial Hospital.

"I've become a connoisseur of gum," said the former nearly pack-a-day smoker and director of ancillary services at Wayne Memorial Hospital. Mr. Hockenbury, 46, smoked for 22 years. He decided to quit at his family's request and when he learned that the hospital was switching to smoke-free.

Carol Brennan, manager of food services, had five smokers out of 24 employees in her department. Two, whom she described as "lifelong smokers" went tobacco-free. Now, only one of her employees smokes, but is "very compliant" with the new regulations, she said.

Like employees, patients are not permitted to smoke inside or outside. "When you get on an airplane, do you say, 'Excuse me, I want to go to the cockpit and light up?'" Ms. Decker said.

Robert Hild, 47, a hospital maintenance worker, has smoked for 30 years. "I didn't try to quit," he said. "I just cut back, from 10 (cigarettes) to four a day" at work — two during his morning break and two at lunchtime. Overall, he's decreased his habit by half a pack a day. Mr. Hild said he's feeling better and is less short-winded when walking the stairs. "I just figured I'd try it, try to cut down instead of sitting on the sidewalk," he said. The longtime smoker may even try to kick the habit for good, "eventually, someday." Wayne Hospital adapting to life without smokes. BY MEGAN REITER STAFF WRITER. 1/30/2007

Rose Holmes wrote on January 04, 2007 4:55 PM: "I am happy to hear that Mercy is no longer enabling any of us to continue smoking. I know it is very difficult to tackle this addiction. I quit smoking after thirty years. It was like saying goodbye to a long, yet really bad relationship. I hope people will grab on to any helping hand/support they can get." Mercy hospital, clinics to go tobacco-free. By JULIE BIRKEDAL, of The Globe Gazette. 1/4/07

Caught a letter here the other day from someone bleating about the new Central Vermont Medical Center smoke-out program. This new development bans any smoking on the hospital's property. I say, "it's about time." Ending hypocrisy about smoking on a hospital's grounds is long in coming. This hospital treats thousands of cancer patients and respiratory-related illnesses a year, yet they were allowing staff, patients and visitors the opportunity to attempt to kill themselves right there on hospital property. Kudos to hospital's smoking ban. The Times Argus.com November 27, 2006

Health risks, the rising costs of cigarettes, and even his daughter's pleas haven't stopped Roger Galimba from smoking for 27 years. But when Galimba's employer, Group Health Cooperative, announced its campuses would go smoke-free by Jan. 1, he had one thought: It's time to quit. "It will be good if I don't have a place to smoke at work," Galimba said. "You come here and you see other people smoking ... it's tough." Some Hospitals Won't Let Smokers Light Up Anywhere on Grounds. SONIA KRISHNAN / Seattle Times 2dec2006. <http://www.mindfully.org/Air/2006/Hospital-Smoking-Ban2dec06.htm>

***Mindfully.org note:***

We fully support a complete ban on smoking in any public place, whether it is inside a building or outside. Smokers have absolutely no right to contaminate the air. And **hospitals**, of all places, have an obligation to put those flames out where ever they see them. Any worker violating the ban should be sent home without pay for the day. If they violate the ban more than 3 times, they should stay at home. The fact that smoking causes cancer has been well established and is only disputed by wishful thinkers and those with a death wish. Don't expect an explanation after decades of knowing that tobacco causes cancer.

I work at Blue Cross and this was a great motivator for me to finally quit smoking. Thank you BCBSM! Posted: Tue Feb 06, 2007 12:29 pm. Starting April 1: No smoking at Mich. Blue Cross facilities. February 6, 200. By PATRICIA ANSTETT. Freep.com FREE PRESS MEDICAL WRITER

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What hospital employees are saying: Those employees who are NOT interested in quitting tobacco

Many staff members, prompted by the new smoking ban, are going to try to quit smoking, said Violet Busby, a Kaiser research associate. Although she has tried pills, patches and hypnotism, Busby has been unable to kick the habit. "We can't even smoke in our own cars when it is parked on the property," Busby said. "I guess I will just have to walk across the street and smoke on the sidewalk there." Kaiser center now smoke free Hospital offers resources on quitting to ease transition By ANDREA WOLF, Times-Herald correspondent Article Launched: 02/14/2007 07:41:27 AM PST

When I first heard about it, I was angry," said Martha Savage, a Baylor employee. "I thought, 'well, why don't they pick on people who are fat? Why are they picking on us?' Then I got to thinking on it, and I thought it is the right thing for Baylor to do." Savage is among about a thousand Baylor Dallas employees forced to kick the habit. Administrators admitted the smoking ban is overdue.

Once she got over being angry, Martha Savage took action. With the help of counseling, medicine and the occasional piece of candy, she quit smoking at 10:00 p.m. December 6th, to be exact. "It's working, so far," Savage said. "I'm excited. My husband's excited. My daughter's excited, you know, that Mom's going to quit." Baylor Hospitals to go Smoke-Free. By JANET ST. JAMES / WFAA-TV. 12/20/06

When are they gonna ban fat people? This policy is very much over the top and unfair, and I dont even smoke! Makes me wanna go there and light up a blunt. Posted: Tue Feb 06, 2007 5:01 pm

I think they are wrong for banning smoking in a personal vehicle on their property. Smoking outside has no effect on anyone's health. However, you should be more concerned with all the other pollutants in the air you all seem to ignore. I don't think people should have to be subjected to indoor smoking in public places, but please don't tell me about secondhand smoke when someone is smoking outdoors with all the car exhaust and other industrial pollutants in the air. Hope they apply the same regulations to the obese - no overeating in public places, etc.

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