

Tobacco Free Hospital Campus Policy - Timeline for Implementation

6 months countdown

- Chose a date such as January 1, July 4 Independence Day, or Great American Smoke Out in November as target dates to assist in public relations campaign.
- Work with administration to finalize policy. The policy needs to address all three aspects – staff, visitors, and patients.
- Form a committee of employees (non-smokers and smokers) to review concerns and assist in policy formatting. Call it a task force. This will help with employee buy-in to the policy change (if they have representation on the committee). Committee members should include: PR, HR, administration, wellness, Facilities, Security, clinical and non clinical staff including night staff, tobacco cessation counselor, staff development for education, medical staff representative, and outlying clinics, if needed. May form subgroups but be specific about what tasks each group is assigned to avoid duplication.
- Meet with admitting department to see if forms need to be changed to include the policy/signature.
- Meet with nursing administration to assess inpatient referral protocol, current nursing assessment of tobacco use and any changes that may need to be made to forms or staff education.
- Involve all shifts.
- Involve Public Relations department to outline a schedule of releases regarding the new tobacco free campus policy to the local community through radio, cable TV, print material, and advertisements. Releases should be routine over the course of the 6-month period. PR campaign needs to have a crescendo effect building to implementation date. Cannot have too much PR with this policy. Don't forget the web site.
- Meet with Human Resources to change job applications and interview process to include information regarding the policy change for new or prospective employees.
- Meet with Facilities Management to secure purchase of signage for all entrances and drives onto the hospital property. Have temporary signage for announcement of the policy change to have in place prior to the date of implementation. Have internal signs at all waiting areas (ER, Surgery, Outpatient testing, admitting).
- Move ash receptacles 20 feet away from all entrances.
- Promote employee cessation counseling with any incentives via usual hospital communication channels

5 months countdown

- Have final policy available to all management teams and supervisors. Review policy at mandatory employee meetings. Have signature page for employee to sign to verify knowledge of the new policy.
- Make available a mechanism of feedback for employees such as a suggestion box, which will help identify concerns and allow time to address those concerns. Do not have this as a means to debate the issue. There is no debating the policy.
- Continue public relations campaign.
- Ongoing meetings with employee task force and policy team.

- Consider how to manage the tobacco dependent inpatient and establish protocol that can be instituted immediately.
- Continue communication regarding availability of tobacco cessation counseling for employees.

4 months countdown

- Meetings with management to outline their responsibilities for implementing and enforcing the policy. These meetings will be useful in anticipating and preparing for potential problems such as abuse of employee breaks, patient and visitor concerns. Role-playing scenarios with staff may be helpful.
- Continue with Public Relations campaign to educate the community as well as the staff, patient, and visitors.
- Continue to promote cessation assistance that is available as well as offering educational opportunities on nicotine dependency, stress management, diet, and exercise.

3 months countdown

- Publish in employee communications, testimonials of new non smoking employees and their positive experience from the workplace cessation assistance.
- Address those employees resistant to quit by offering educational materials, articles in employee newsletter regarding the benefits of quitting tobacco, offering health risk appraisals or other health assessments, and reviewing the incentives offered to quit.
- Continue all committee work – HR, PR, employee education, and management policy education/troubleshooting

2 months countdown

- Address any concerns from the management regarding enforcement. Offer realistic solutions. Enforcement should be a positive approach rather than a punitive approach. Use the corrective action mechanism to assist an employee to seek help from the institution. Have management discuss policy in detail with staff.
- Have letters to editor with words of praise for this healthy choice decision.
- Continue to promote cessation assistance.
- Reminder letter of policy to all referring physicians. Discuss the educational opportunities in the office and also the inpatient care available. Encourage outpatient referrals to tobacco cessation counselor.

1 month countdown

- Meet with Facilities Management to assure signage ordered is adequate and will be install at policy implementation.
- Continue with management meetings, human resources, and public relations involvement.

- Strongly encourage employee cessation through a vigorous campaign with the deadline near. Be prepared for an increase in cessation interest with deadline approaching.
- Hold support group meetings for new non tobacco using employees to aid in relapse prevention.

Implementation date

- Tobacco free policy in place. Media event if desired.
- Patients sign acknowledgement of policy with admission papers (Optional). If not signing form, admission clerks need to have a script telling of new policy to all who are admitted.
- All ash receptacles need to be removed from the property.
- Smoking huts removed.
- Signage on all entrances and driveways in place.
- Continue public relations campaign of new policy for employees as well as community.
- Continue with employee cessation classes and counseling services
- Make available community service points for "butt patrol and cleanup". This helps individuals take ownership of the property and helps in enforcement.

Post implementation evaluation

- Assemble task force on a monthly basis for 3-6 months to address problems with implementation of the new policy and any concerns voiced by employees, patients, or visitors.
- Remind employees to be considerate of neighboring properties and conscious of the fact that their actions reflect directly on the overall image of the medical center.
- Monitor patient satisfaction survey and follow up employee survey.
- Make modifications if needed to the policy. Educate staff and management to any modifications made. Generally no modifications are needed and in fact should be discouraged.
- Question adjoining property neighbors for any problems since implementation of policy. Address concerns with corrective actions and follow up as needed.