

Sample FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS document

Tobacco-Free Hospitals

Q. Why did XX Hospital implement a tobacco-free policy?

A. Smoking and second-hand smoke are the country's most preventable causes of death today, contributing to about 440,000 deaths in the U.S. according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. There is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke, even when outdoors.

As a leader in health care, XX is making the commitment to provide a healthy environment and to support healthy behavior in our employees, patients and visitors. XX is joined by many Maine hospitals and health systems by implementing smoke and tobacco-free campuses to make Maine a healthier place to live and work. In a demonstration of leading through example, the XX have chosen to become smoke-free on DATE HERE.

Q. When did the tobacco-free campus policy take effect?

A. The tobacco-free policy was effective on DATE HERE.

Q. What does tobacco-free mean?

A. The tobacco-free policy prohibits smoking and the use of tobacco products (including cigarettes, chew, cigars, e-cigarettes and other tobacco products) on the entire XX Hospital campus. This includes all buildings, grounds, parking lots, off site locations, in hospital vehicles, and in personal vehicles on hospital properties.

Q. Who is covered by the tobacco-free initiative?

A. Anyone on the hospital's campus or off site locations, including employees, physicians, volunteers, contracted workers, EMS personnel, vendors, visitors and patients.

Q. Can I smoke in my car?

A. No. Smoking is not permitted on the premises of the XX Hospital campus, which includes parking lots. If your automobile is on the hospital property, you are not permitted to smoke in your car.

Q. How do I know if I am located on XX Hospital property?

A. Maps are available clearly indicating XX Hospital buildings and properties. Individuals who wish to smoke must leave the hospital campus. Those who choose to smoke outside of campus boundaries are asked to be considerate of private businesses and homes by properly disposing of smoking materials and limiting others' exposure to second-hand smoke.

Q. What about using restrooms, stairwells or cars as places to smoke?

A. Smoking is not allowed anywhere on the campus, including stairwells, restrooms and cars.

Q. What has been done to help smokers and tobacco users?

A. A number of resources are available to help smokers quit or reduce their tobacco use. They include XX (ie: smoking cessation programs, Nicotine Replacement Therapy and informational material). More information is available by XX (talking to your supervisor, visiting the hospital website, etc). Any Maine resident can call the Maine Tobacco HelpLine for free, confidential counseling and support at 1-800-207-1230. For those who qualify, free nicotine replacement therapy is also available from the HelpLine.

Q. Do I have to quit smoking or stop using tobacco?

A. The tobacco-free policy is not about making tobacco users quit but about maintaining a healthy environment and eliminating exposure to tobacco or second hand smoke. Employees do not have to quit smoking. They are however, required to abide by the tobacco-free policy and refrain from smoking on our campus. We encourage everyone to seek counseling and advice about their tobacco use and possible resources to help them quit smoking or to learn how to get through the day in a tobacco-free work site.

Q.What can I do to help others quit smoking?

A. Quitting tobacco can be a difficult process and many people make several quit attempts before they are successful. The good news is that each time someone attempts to quit, their chances to quit for good actually get better. One excellent resource is the Maine Tobacco HelpLine. It offers free, confidential support over the phone to all Maine residents 1.800.207.1230.

Q. What action will be taken if I continue to smoke on the premises of XX Hospital?

A. Employees who ignore the policy will be reported to their supervisor and will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. The corrective action level will be determined by the employee's current place in the corrective action process for violation of the Smoke and Tobacco-Free Campus Policy.

Q. What are my responsibilities if I see someone (patient, visitor of staff) smoking on hospital property?

A. Security is responsible for enforcement. However, employees should politely offer information to the person committing the violation as if they did not know about the policy. “Excuse me sir, perhaps you didn’t realize this is a smoke-free campus. We would appreciate it if you would put your cigarette out. Smoking is permitted outside the grounds.”

Our goal is to make our campus healthier for patients, visitors and employees. Smoking is the most preventable cause of premature death in the world. Our efforts to be tobacco-free present an opportunity to help many individuals achieve healthier lifestyles. We welcome your questions and concerns. Please email us (**give email address**) if you have additional suggestions.