

TOBACCO-FREE HOSPITALS CHECKLIST FOR TAKING ACTION

1. Secure and announce commitment from senior management to establish and enforce a tobacco-free environment policy.
2. Identify an appropriate member of senior staff to be responsible for, and have the authority to, coordinate the development and implementation of this initiative.
3. Establish a diverse task force to plan implementation. Include staff from various departments, employee organizations, smokers and nonsmokers, etc., with at least one member who reports directly to senior management.
4. Gather necessary information about:
 - Medical, economic and social impact of tobacco use in your state/community;
 - Examples of policies implemented by other hospitals and health systems;
 - Facility specifics (physical constraints or contracts with other organizations that may influence policy decisions);
 - Employees (percentage of tobacco users/non-users, level of support/opposition to initiative, interest in cessation programs, etc.);
 - Your facility's current tobacco use policy;
 - Legal issues (state laws, regulations, union or other contracts)
 - Budget requirements; and
 - How to address special concerns (i.e. psychiatric and long-term care patients).
5. Draft the implementation plan and have it reviewed by appropriate individuals and groups. Make necessary revisions following reviews and finalize the implementation plan.
6. Announce the policy and plan for implementation to all employees. This should be done in writing, from the CEO. Allow enough time before your implementation date to adequately educate and prepare staff, patients, visitors, vendors and others.

7. Educate employees, patients, visitors, vendors and the community at large.

- Hold training sessions for managers;
- Provide for feedback sessions for employees;
- Distribute information through the hospital's newsletter, paycheck inserts, staff, E-mails, department bulletin boards, etc.
- Post signs throughout the hospital (registration and waiting areas, hallways, elevators, etc.);
- Set up educational displays in lobbies and distribute flyers;
- Send letters to families of employees;
- Work with local media to announce the policy initiative;
- Include flyers in patient communications such as appointment reminders, registration packets and patient room instructions; and
- Post notices about the policy in areas in which tobacco use is currently permitted.

8. Offer and promote tobacco cessation services to employees and their families.

- Implement these services at least six months prior to implementation of the policy;
- Identify and train staff members who will be responsible for providing these services; and
- Identify additional cessation services in the community for referral.

9. Obtain insurance coverage of at least one tobacco cessation drug for employees and their families.

10. Make arrangements for your hospital pharmacy to carry tobacco cessation pharmaceutical products. Set up system/protocol for distribution of products to staff, patients and visitors.

11. Make any necessary changes to the facility to prepare for implementation.

- Post signs; and
- Remove ash cans.

12. Enforce the policy beginning on implementation day. Celebrate the day with various activities.

13. Periodically evaluate and refine the policy.

14. Be patient. This policy change may be a very significant adjustment for some individuals.