



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Smoke-Free Together: Why are we doing this?

Smoking is the leading preventable cause of premature disease and death. Smoking and exposure to second-hand smoke directly contribute to devastating health conditions such as cancer, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), cardiovascular disease and stroke. Horizon Health Network (Horizon), as a leader in health promotion and staff wellness, is dedicated to improving the health of its patients, employees and community.

Where on the hospital grounds does the smoke-free policy apply?

All Horizon facilities and grounds are 100% smoke-free.

What does a smoke-free hospital/facility mean?

All tobacco products/medical marijuana/herbal products intended to be smoked or heated, e-cigarettes/ENDS (Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems), vaping devices or any other smoking devices are strictly prohibited on hospital property, including inside any vehicle parked on the grounds.

Who do I contact if I have questions, feedback, or concerns about enforcement and compliance?

Horizon has set up a phone line and an email address to facilitate communication with its employees, patients and visitors. If you want to share your ideas or concerns, please feel free to contact us at 506-648-7552 or by email at smokefree_sansfumee@HorizonNB.ca.

To whom does the policy apply?

All employees, volunteers, students, patients, visitors, vendors, contractors and others who work in or visit Horizon facilities, parking lots and grounds.

Don't smokers have a right to smoke?

There is no legal right to smoke. We are not asking employees, visitors and patients to quit smoking, but to refrain from smoking while working or visiting a Horizon facility.

Why can't we have smoking huts or other designated outdoor smoking locations?

Smoking and second-hand smoke are known health hazards. Horizon is committed to promoting a safe and healthy environment to foster wellness. Smoking on hospital property, even in designated areas, is not consistent with this commitment. There is no safe level of second-hand smoke. Patients, visitors and employees should not be exposed to second-hand smoke while on hospital property. Smoke-free properties reduce harm, promote healthy choices, and support a safe and healthy environment for everyone.

Doesn't this policy punish smokers?

This new policy is not intended to punish smokers. It is designed to provide patients, visitors and staff with a healthy and safe facility and workplace.

What kind of support is provided to inpatients who smoke?

Every inpatient will be screened for tobacco use and offered nicotine replacement therapy to help manage any nicotine withdrawal symptoms while in hospital. If inpatients are interested in smoking cessation, these supports will also be available.

What kind of support is being offered to employees?

Resources to assist employees in smoking cessation and/or nicotine withdrawal management will be provided through the Employee Health and Wellness Department.

What kind of support is being offered to visitors?

Visitors who wish to smoke must leave the hospital grounds. We encourage visitors to discuss Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) options with their community pharmacist if they plan to be on hospital property for extended periods of time. Nicotine Replacement gum will be available for sale at many of Horizon's hospital gift shops. Visitors will also be encouraged to access the Smoker's Helpline, which is available free of charge at 1-877-513-5333 or by visiting www.smokershelpline.ca.

Won't there be more litter around the property because of cigarette butts?

As ambassadors and good neighbours, employees are expected to treat surrounding public areas and private properties with respect. This means that staff should avoid littering, including cigarette butts and other trash, on all properties adjoining ours.

How will visitors and patients be notified?

Interior and exterior signs are in place throughout Horizon facilities. Other methods of communication will also be used to ensure visitors and patients are aware of the policy.

Smoking helps calm down some of our patients. When they can't smoke, won't we experience complete mayhem?

Facilities that do not allow smoking report fewer incidents of seclusion and restraint and a reduction in coercion and threats among patients and staff. Uncomfortable nicotine withdrawal symptoms will be reduced by the appropriate use of nicotine replacement therapy and other medications.

How will the policy be enforced?

We plan to continue enforcing this policy through friendly interactions; however, effective September 2017, individuals can be fined for smoking on our properties. We ask that all interactions be empathetic and respectful. Nicotine is addictive and the person you are



approaching may be struggling with their tobacco use. All encounters should be supportive, not punishing.

Anyone found smoking on the property will be reminded that Horizon's Smoke-Free Environment Policy prohibits smoking of any products in or on the property. Individuals will be asked to stop smoking or vaping on the premises. They may be directed off site or for further support. If an individual is non-compliant with the policy, they can be fined by local law enforcement. [Click here](#) for more information about the Government of New Brunswick's *Smoke-free Places Act*.

Inpatients will be asked to seek guidance from their patient care team so that further support can be offered, i.e., nicotine withdrawal supports. Efforts should be made to report the incident to the patient's care team.

Employees found smoking or using tobacco on the premises will be asked to stop, reminded of the policy and informed of tools that may ease symptoms while they are at work. If they are ready to quit, they will be provided with resources to help them. If staff do not wish to comply with the policy, their supervisor will be informed. Repeat offenders will be subject to disciplinary action.

Managers and security are accountable and responsible for using appropriate protocol for occasions when any person smokes on hospital property, including contacting local law enforcement to issue fines. Employees are also encouraged to assist with promoting the policy.

Will the smoking policy be explained to job applicants?

Job applicants and new hires are informed of the Horizon Smoke-Free Environment Policy. The policy is also reviewed at new employee orientations.

I'm a smoker. How can I get help?

We know quitting smoking is a process that doesn't happen the same way for everyone. Research shows that you will be most successful with a combination of support, coaching and medications. The Employee Health and Wellness department will be offering supports. Other options include speaking to your personal health-care provider or accessing the free Smokers Helpline (1-877-513-5333) or website (www.smokershelpline.ca).

Smokers Helpline, 1-877-513-5333 is a free resource. You will talk directly to a non-judgmental Quit Coach who can help you; whether you are thinking about quitting, ready to quit, actively quitting, need help staying smoke-free, not ready to quit or want to help someone else quit.

They can help:

- Make a personalized quit plan
- Manage cravings, withdrawal symptoms and stress
- Learn about quit aids
- Find local support in your community
- Provide optional follow-up calls throughout your quitting journey

People come to an acute psychiatric unit in crisis. Aren't these the times they most need to smoke?

While overall smoking has decreased, the proportion of smokers with psychiatric diagnoses has increased. Approximately 40% of individuals with mental illness smoke cigarettes, compared with 17% of the general population. People with serious mental illness die, on average, 25 years younger than the general population – largely from the ravages of smoking, according to a 2006 report by the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD). Comprehensive programs to curb tobacco use have the potential to help patients with mental illness choose to quit and learn new ways to live longer, healthier lives.

How will Horizon pay to transform our facility so drastically?

There have been some costs to transition to a 100% smoke-free organization, such as ongoing staff training, signage, and employee access to smoking cessation aids. The return on this investment includes: longer, healthier lives for patients and staff; financial savings through improved employee health and productivity; and the knowledge that we are achieving excellence by providing people with the healthy, therapeutic environment they deserve and expect at Horizon.

Why is Horizon paying for nicotine replacement therapy for their staff?

Horizon is committed to promoting a safe and healthy work environment to support the wellness of our employees. Smoking is the leading preventable cause of premature disease and death. Research shows a combination of support and medications will maximize smoking cessation success. Currently most of our hospital employees do not have any coverage for smoking cessation aids. Recognizing the goal of our policy is a smoke-free environment, Horizon leaders have agreed that by helping the minority of employees that smoke, this will create a healthier environment for all.

References:

National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (2010). Tobacco-Free Living in Psychiatric Settings: A best-practices toolkit promoting wellness and recovery. Retrieved from http://www.integration.samhsa.gov/pbhci-learning-community/Tobacco-Free_Living_in_Psychiatric_Settings_Toolkit.pdf

Nebraska Hospital Association (2007). Moving Toward a Tobacco-Free Future: A Resource Guide for Nebraska Hospitals and Health Systems. Retrieved from <http://nlcs1.nlc.state.ne.us/epubs/H8250/H001-2007.pdf>

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