

Model Tobacco-Free Policy for Nursing Homes

Purpose

The U.S. Surgeon General reports that secondhand smoke (SHS) causes lung cancer and poses an increased risk of heart disease in adult non-smokers. Separating smokers and non-smokers within the same air space may reduce, but does not eliminate, a non-smoker's exposure to SHS. Further, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the National Institute for Environmental Health Sciences have concluded that SHS is a Group A Carcinogen a toxin known to cause cancer in humans.

Of the over 416,000 smoking-related deaths annually in the U.S., over 94% are to persons aged 50 and over, while over 70% are to persons aged 65 and over. All the major causes of death among the elderly (cancer, heart disease, and stroke) are associated with smoking or SHS. Recent research indicates that smoking is related to a number of health problems and diseases that are generally associated with aging, including hearing loss, dementia, and Alzheimers.

The leading cause of residential fires that result in fatalities in older adults is smoking, and that the older adult population represents the highest fire risk group in the United States with a risk of more than twice the national average.

Supported by these findings, this facility will become a 100% tobacco-free campus effective _____ (date). Thus, the use of all tobacco containing or tobacco derived products, smokeless tobacco (snuff, chewing tobacco, dip, snus), e-cigarettes, and other tobacco or non-FDA approved cessation products are prohibited. It does not apply to nicotine replacement therapy products (gum, patch, lozenge, inhaler), which help tobacco users with cessation efforts.

Goals

The goal of this policy is to provide a tobacco-free environment for all employees, residents/patients, visitors, and contractors within its facilities, vehicles, grounds and at all sponsored events. This goal will be achieved through efforts designed to:

- Exhibit tobacco-free behavior;
- Eliminate exposure to secondhand smoke (SHS);
- Promote and provide access to smoking cessation counseling and/or referral services.

Procedures

This facility will:

- Prohibit the sale and the use and/or possession of all tobacco products, alternative nicotine products or paraphernalia including, but not limited to, cigarettes, e-cigarettes, cigars, pipes, smokeless tobacco and snuff by all employees, residents/patients, visitors and contractors while on the property and in any facility vehicles.
- Display appropriate signage in all areas (facilities, grounds, and vehicles), and provide the policy in writing (contracts, orientation manuals, performance evaluations, etc.).
- Incorporate the use of the "Clinical Practice Guideline for Treating Tobacco Use and Dependence" into the patient screening process.

Enforcement

This facility will enforce this policy and determine appropriate disciplinary actions similar to enforcement steps for other policies for the facility.

Education and Assistance

Facility leadership/management will be responsible for assuring employees, residents/patients and the public are aware of the new policy and provide assistance for compliance by:

- Promoting and providing referrals to smoking cessation counseling programs.
- Providing reimbursement and other incentives for participation in smoking cessation programs;

Tobacco Industry Marketing or Sponsorship

This facility will not accept any contributions or gifts, money or materials from the tobacco industry or related companies. Also, this facility will not participate in any type of functions that are funded by the tobacco industry. In addition, any gear or clothing that advertises tobacco use or tobacco products will not be allowed on the grounds or property.