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# Smoke Free WA Health System Policy Implementation Procedure

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## 1. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The WA Country Health Service (WACHS) is committed to reducing tobacco consumption and acknowledges it has a duty of care to provide smoke free environments that minimise exposure of patients, staff and visitors to the harmful effects of second hand smoke.

This Smoke Free Procedure sets a positive example to the wider community, complementing other health promotion messages.

This procedure underpins the [Smoke Free WA Healthy System policy](#).

## 2. PROCEDURE

Managers and supervisors are responsible for the implementation of the Smoke Free Procedure in their respective areas. Employees who believe they are unable to comply with the procedure should discuss this issue with their manager or supervisor.

### 2.1 Employees and Contracted Staff

WACHS employees and contractors are not permitted to smoke:

- within any WACHS buildings, grounds or outdoor environments
- while officially on shift or duty
- during any paid meal breaks, or
- while representing WACHS in an official capacity.

Employees have the right to refuse to accompany client(s) to the boundary of the Health Service site to enable them to smoke. Staff are encouraged to review the [Smoke Free WA Health: Information for staff, contractors and volunteers](#) website if they have any questions or concerns about the policy.

#### 2.1.1 Job Advertisements, Tenders and Pre-employment Material

Information about the [Smoke Free WA Healthy System policy](#) is to be included in correspondence sent to applicants who express an interest in WACHS positions/vacancies. A statement advising applicants that WACHS is smoke free is to be included in the 'Important Advice for Applicants' document and Job Advertisements (where possible).

#### 2.1.2 Home Visits

Employees conducting home visits can request that clients refrain from smoking in their presence when undergoing treatment or care. If a client and/or other person(s) in the premises do not refrain from smoking, the employee can request to speak with the client outside (e.g. on the patio or veranda). If any problems persist, employees are to discuss the situation with their supervisor or manager for advice on the course of action.

### 2.1.3 Employee Training Development and Service Delivery

Employees involved in direct patient/client contact are to have access to educational opportunities such as the Brief Intervention for Alcohol and Tobacco.

### 2.1.4 Assistance for Nicotine Dependent Staff

All WACHS staff who wish to quit smoking or manage their nicotine dependence while at work are to be provided with two courses of eight weeks nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) free of charge. There must be a minimum of one month between each eight week course of NRT provided.

Staff will be able to access the two courses of eight weeks free NRT **once only** during their employment with the Health Service.

See WACHS [Employee Access to Nicotine Replacement Therapy Procedure](#) and WACHS [Employee Application for Nicotine Replacement Therapy Form](#).

### 2.1.5 Staff Wanting to Access Smoking Cessation Programs

Staff may be eligible to access smoking cessation programs run within their region. The cost of the course is to be determined at the region's discretion. Quitting smoking or attending smoking cessation programs is not mandatory.

## 2.2 Patients / Clients

Upon admission to a WACHS health service site, all patients are to be given information about the [Smoke Free WA Healthy System Policy](#) and be assessed for nicotine dependence. WACHS staff are to conduct a brief intervention for those patients that admit to using tobacco, where possible.

For more information please see the WACHS [Administration of the Alcohol and Tobacco Brief Intervention Procedure](#), [Clinical guidelines for Management of Nicotine Dependent Inpatients](#) and [Guidelines to manage nicotine withdrawal and cessation support in nicotine dependent patient](#).

Nicotine dependent inpatients are to:

- be advised that the Health Service is smoke free
- have their nicotine dependence assessed
- be provided with brief intervention, if possible
- have their withdrawal symptoms monitored
- be provided with NRT free of charge, and
- be provided with three days of NRT on discharge, where appropriate.

Patients and clients are encouraged to review the [Smoke Free WA Health](#) website if they have any questions or concerns about the policy.

### 2.3 Long Term Aged Care and Mental Health Residents

Long term aged care and mental health residents are to be treated the same as other patients and in accordance with the [Clinical guidelines and procedures for the management of nicotine dependent inpatients](#) and [Framework for the Treatment of Nicotine Addiction](#).

Allowance is granted that adult (18 years of age and over) involuntary mental health inpatients may be exempted from the Smoke Free WA Health System Policy, in certain circumstances. The [Guidelines for partial exemption of involuntary mental health inpatients aged 18 years and over in certain circumstances from the application of certain aspects of the Smoke Free WA Health System Policy](#) have been developed outlining the criteria that must be satisfied.

For specific Mental Health Services within the WA Country Health Service please consult the [Smoke Free WA Health System Policy: Partial exemption for involuntary mental health patients – Guidelines for Mental Health Services](#) to support the implementation of the partial exemption.

### 2.4 Members of the Public, Visitors and Outpatients

All members of the public, visitors and outpatients are prohibited from smoking while in any WACHS buildings, grounds, outdoor environment, or vehicle.

### 2.5 Policy Breaches

Please read in conjunction with the Department of Health Smoke Free Health Systems Policy [Guidelines for management, compliance and enforcement](#).

#### 2.5.1 Policy Breaches by Employees

Smoking breaches are to be treated as would any misconduct or breach of policy.

Employees who breach the policy, in the first instance, are to be counselled by their supervisor or manager. The supervisor is to explain the [Smoke Free WA Healthy System policy](#) and [Occupational Safety and Health Act \(1984\)](#) requirements. Enquiries are to be made regarding whether the employee requires assistance to stop smoking or manage their nicotine dependency while at work. The supervisor can direct the employee to an appropriate contact person or organisation if they wish to stop smoking or require assistance to manage their nicotine dependency while at work. The supervisor is to keep a written record of the interview in the employee's personal file.

If a staff member continues to breach the policy, the supervisor or manager is to explain that a formal disciplinary process is to take place and this could lead to termination of employment. Any breach of this policy is to be dealt with in line with the [WA Health Misconduct Policy](#) (and local guidelines where applicable).

For further information, please contact your regional Human Resources Department.

### 2.5.2 Policy Breaches by Patients, Visitors and Volunteers

Non-compliance with the policy by patients and visitors is to be dealt with in an educative and non-confrontational manner by staff. Non-compliant patients and visitors are to be reminded of the [Smoke Free WA Healthy System Policy](#) and asked to either extinguish their cigarette or move to a location off Department of Health property.

Health Services are encouraged to hold regular training sessions for supervisors, security and other staff to ensure that the policy is enforced in an educative and non-confrontational manner.

If the above approach fails to ensure compliance, the matter is to be referred to the relevant Supervisor of the premise or authorised person(s).

### 2.6 Vehicles

Smoking is strictly prohibited in all WACHS vehicles. All vehicles are to have “no smoking” signs displayed in view of the driver and passengers. The coordinator responsible for fleet management is to ensure that all vehicles have 'no smoking' stickers installed.

### 2.7 Accommodation Owned or Leased By WACHS

Smoking is banned inside all staff accommodation owned or leased by WACHS. Tenants are to be informed that accommodation facilities are non-smoking prior to their occupancy, which is also to be articulated in tenancy agreements.

### 2.8 Functions and Events

All official functions and events (including dinners, presentations, meetings and social occasions) are to be smoke free. No tobacco products are to be sold at these events.

### 2.9 Sale of Tobacco

WACHS, or any premises under the control of WACHS, is not to sell tobacco products or lighters.

### 2.10 Delivery of Services and Resources

Any services and resources delivered by WACHS, for example education, promotion or printed materials is to support the [Smoke Free WA Healthy System Policy](#). This involves removing pictures of materials that depict smoking behaviours from resources, as well as amending resources to promote a non-smoking philosophy or consequences of smoking.

### 2.11 Installation of Signage and Ash Bins

Please read in conjunction with the Department of Health Smoke Free WA Health System Policy [Guidelines for the Development of Smoke Free WA Health System Policy Communication Strategies](#).

Smoke free signage is imperative in communicating the smoke free policy as well as maintaining the message and ensures consistency and credibility across the WA Health System. Signage is to be placed strategically throughout the site:

- At the entrance of the site
- At every entrance and exit to the building
- At all previous designated smoking areas
- At lifts and stairwells
- At all courtyards and places of congregation
- Within all vehicles that are the property of the health service.

Signage is to remain visible at all times and be well maintained. All graffiti is to be attended to regularly, and damaged or removed signage is to be replaced immediately. The prominent display of cigarette butt bins at the perimeter of WA Health grounds is also recommended.

Visit the [Smoke Free website](#) for information about Smoke Free signage.

### 3. DEFINITIONS

<b>Tobacco</b>	is a plant of the genus <i>Nicotiana</i> that contains poisonous alkaloids.
<b>Second Hand Smoke Exposure</b>	is the breathing in of another person’s smoke which may come directly in a stream from a nearby cigarette, or indirectly from a build-up of smoke in the air.
<b>Health Service Sites</b>	includes all buildings, grounds and outdoor environments within and through which services are accessed, planned and provided. This includes sites where WACHS business is carried out even if that site or building is not owned by WACHS.
<b>Paid meal breaks</b>	are refreshment / tea breaks taken during 'paid work time'.
<b>Nicotine Replacement Therapy</b>	pharmacotherapies designed to alleviate nicotine withdrawal. Includes nicotine patches, lozenge, microtab, gum and inhaler.

### 4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of all Department of Health staff, contractors and visitors to abide by the [Smoke Free WA Health System Policy](#).

WACHS staff (particularly management), security and OSH representatives are responsible for ensuring that staff, contractors, clients and visitors comply with the WA Health Smoke Free Policy.

### 5. EVALUATION

The WA Country Health Service is required to report to the Director General on a six (6) monthly basis, regarding the results from compliance monitoring and other current and proposed activities to support measures to provide a smoke free environment for all employees, patients and contractors.

This procedure is to be reviewed every two years or sooner, if required by the WACHS Population Health Senior Program Officer.

## 6. REFERENCES

1. Department of Health, Western Australia. [Framework for the Treatment of Nicotine Addiction](#). Respiratory Health Network, 2010.
2. Department of Health, Western Australia. [Smoke Free WA Health: Advice for patients](#). Tobacco Control Branch, 2009.
3. Department of Health, Western Australia. [Smoke Free WA Health System Policy - Clinical guidelines and procedures for the management of nicotine dependent inpatients](#). 2011.
4. Department of Health, Western Australia. [Smoke Free WA Healthy System Policy – Going Smoke Free; Guidelines for the Development of Smoke Free WA Health System Policy Communication Strategies](#).
5. Department of Health, Western Australia. [Smoke Free WA Healthy System Policy - Guidelines for management, compliance and enforcement](#).
6. Department of Health, Western Australia. [Smoke Free WA Health System Policy Operational Directive OD 0414/13](#). 2013.
7. Department of Health, Western Australia. [Smoke Free WA: Information for staff, contractors and volunteers](#). Tobacco Control Branch, 2009.
8. Department of Health, Western Australia. [WA Health Misconduct Policy](#). 2014.
9. [Occupational Safety and Health Act \(1984\)](#)
10. WA Country Health Service. [Administration of the Alcohol and Tobacco Screening Tool and Brief Intervention Procedure](#).
11. WA Country Health Service. [Alcohol and Tobacco Brief Intervention Course](#).
12. WA Country Health Service. [Employee Access to Nicotine Replacement Therapy Procedure](#). 2010.
13. Department of Health, Western Australia. [Guidelines for partial exemption of involuntary mental health inpatients aged 18 years and over in certain circumstances from the application of certain aspects of the Smoke Free WA Health System Policy](#). 2013.
14. Department of Health, Western Australia. [Guidelines for Mental Health Services to support the implementation of the partial exemption](#). 2013.

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