**Smokefree Policy**

Version 1 – September 2024   
Enquiries: Insert here

**This policy is relevant for staff at hospital sites: (Insert trust here)**

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| **Target Audience/ Scope:**  ***(who is the document applicable to)*** | **All members of staff including locum, bank, agency, honorary contracts, volunteers, staff in training, contractors, seconded staff on temporary or permanent contracts.**  **The scope includes all staff (as above) and patients, carers and visitors.** |
| **Associated Trust Documents:**  (policies / guidelines which directly impact on this document) |  |
| **Date of Approval: Insert here** | **Review Date: Insert here** |
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**1. Introduction**

**1.1** **This Smokefree Hospital Policy is centred on three key pledges:**

* To protect every patient, staff member and visitor on the hospital site from the harms of tobacco smoke.
* To support every person that smokes to be tobacco-free (not necessarily nicotine-free) whilst on the hospital site (recognising that nicotine itself is not a hazardous drug).
* To provide access to highly effective treatments (including medicines, nicotine products, vaping kits) to any person trying to be smokefree on the hospital site.

**2.  Rationale**

**This Hospital is committed to delivering a smokefree hospital for the following reasons:**

**2.1** The addictive chemical in tobacco smoke is nicotine. Nicotine itself is not a hazardous chemical and is not the cause of the harms of smoking. The harms of smoking tobacco come from the thousands of toxic chemicals produced from the combustion of tobacco.

**2.2** Smoking tobacco is the single largest cause of preventable death, ill-health and social inequality in the UK.

**2.3** The treatment of tobacco dependency is a highly cost-effective intervention that addresses health and social disparity with substantial benefits for the individual and the healthcare system.

**2.4** There is no safe exposure level to tobacco smoke (World Health Organisation Framework Convention on Tobacco Control), and we have a responsibility to protect patients, staff, and visitors on site from the harms of tobacco smoke. The major harm from passive smoking is from the ‘side-stream effect’: the smoke emitted from the end of a burning cigarette. The poisonous chemicals in this smoke can linger in hair and clothes and be transported into the hospital and harm our most vulnerable patients.

**2.5** Seeing others smoking is a powerful cue to smoke for those trying to stop smoking. We have responsibility to support people that smoke who are trying to stop.

* 1. This Hospital must be an institute of good health promotion.

**2.7** Following the introduction of comprehensive Smokefree Hospital Policies, evidence shows that in English Trusts where effective management of tobacco dependence is in place there has been a drop in the incidence of violent and aggressive behaviour.

**2.8** Evidence to date shows that implementation of Smokefree Policies in mental health hospitals may also reduce fire risk.

**3.  PURPOSE**

**3.1** To protect every patient, staff member, visitor, and unborn child from the dangers of being exposed to tobacco smoke, by delivering a tobacco smokefree hospital site.

* To support any person that smokes to be tobacco-free whilst on the hospital site and hopefully beyond.
* To ensure people that smoke have comprehensive access to the broad range of evidenced-based interventions to stop smoking whilst on the hospital site.
* To encourage and empower our workforce to be positive role models to promote a smoke free environment, and to signpost patients, visitors, and staff to the services available on the hospital site.
* To lead by example as a model NHS health care provider.
* To maintain compliance with health and safety legislation in providing a smoke free environment.
* Provide a smokefree environment and to support health and wellbeing for all.
* To comply with smokefree legislation.
* Ensure that all healthcare services are delivered in a completely smokefree environment.
* To protect community staff from exposure to second-hand smoke during home/residential visits.
* Identify clear roles and responsibilities of staff.
* Clarify the rights and expectations of patients and visitors.
* Identify the support available for patient and staff to quit or abstain.
* Embed care planning that supports smoking cessation.
* To aid the mitigation of unwanted fire or smoking related environmental. events.
* Provide guidance of the management of any breach.

**4. Values and Behaviours**

**4.1** We have agreed our organisational Values and Behaviours, making it clear the behaviours that each of us need to display to ensure a high-quality and compassionate culture that is required for delivering excellent standards of care. We are committed to creating a harmonious working environment and maintaining good working relationships. This means a working environment in which you can freely speak to your manager about a problem you are facing relating to your employment. This is an important part of ensuring that as an organisation we are living the Trust’s values.  
  

**5.** **Roles and Responsibilities**

* 1. **The Director of Estates and Facilities is responsible for:**
* The implementation of relevant aspects of this policy in their areas and amongst their staff including Private Financial Initiative Partners, Estates and Facilities contractors including:

1. The removal of all smoking-related estate, including smoking shelters, ashtrays, and cigarette bins.
2. Ensuring that the internal and external environment of the Trust is kept clean and free of cigarette ends.
3. Ensuring availability of vaping zones, including areas of cover for times of poor weather and ensuring that the boundaries of these are clearly marked.
4. Displaying prominent smokefree information and no-smoking signage at every hospital entrance to every hospital building as well as displaying information and education on where people can vape.
5. Providing clear information for the public and staff on vaping in the hospital’s external grounds.
6. Contributing to the implementation framework with security-led patrols of quit zones and hospital entrances.

**5.2 Hospital Chief Executive and Corporate Directors are responsible for:**

Implementation of this policy in their areas and amongst their staff including:

* Supporting the uptake of staff training in providing advice, support, treatment, and onward referral to people that smoke.
* Supporting the implementation, dissemination and uptake of stop smoking interventions for NHS staff members that smoke.
* Supporting the development and delivery of a dedicated education and awareness programme on tobacco, smokefree sites and vaping to ensure patients, visitors, and staff and aware of the vaping friendly policy and the evidence on which this is based.

**5.3 Line Managers must:**

* Comply with and implement this policy within their area of responsibility.
* Support the uptake of staff training in providing advice, support, treatment, and onward referral to people that smoke.
* Support the implementation, dissemination and uptake of stop smoking interventions for NHS staff members that smoke.
* Ensure staff are aware of this policy and how it is applicable to patients and visitors.
* Take appropriate steps to prevent or minimise any risks associated with staff exposure to second-hand smoke during home/residential visits.
* Review smoking status of staff on return from sickness and encourage specialist support and treatment for tobacco dependence to support employee health and wellbeing.

**5.4 All Staff and Contractors:**

* All staff and contractors working on our premises are required to adhere to this Smokefree Policy. They should be aware of the important part they play as NHS workers to promote a tobacco-free environment and community.
* NHS staff have a critical and proactive role to play in the help, support and treatment for people that smoke.
* Healthcare workers have a valued and trusted voice, and their actions can be hugely impactful.

**5.5** **NHS Staff and others working on this hospital site must not:**

* Smoke during paid working hours.
* Smoke on any site including community premises run by the Local Care Organisation.
* Smoke at any time where their uniform is visible and /or they are displaying their staff badge.
* Smoke whilst on duty on any other NHS premises inclusive of any community areas, or any other premises where a service to patients is provided.
* Smoke in NHS owned vehicles, or any vehicle leased or rented by the Trust.
* Smoke as a driver or passenger in privately owned vehicles/ privately leased vehicle whilst on the campus or making a journey whilst on duty when transporting work colleagues, patients and/ or equipment.
* Staff that smoke will be supported to remain tobacco-free whilst at work through free access to NRT, vaping devices and specialist support. This is through either the on-site Treating Tobacco Dependency team or the digital stop smoking offer for staff.
* Staff that choose to use vaping as an intervention for tobacco dependency and to remain smokefree at work should do so away from windows and doors and should not vape in these areas.

**5.5.1** **Staff must also be aware of the following:**

* Particles of cigarette smoke and ash can settle on hair and clothing and may be a particular health risk to vulnerable adults, children and babies who are exposed to the toxins.

**5.5.2** **NHS employees have a responsibility to:**

* Complete the online e-learning training module on providing appropriate advice, support and signposting to people that wish to smoke on the hospital grounds, where appropriate.
* Proactively offer very brief advice to smokers they encounter where it is appropriate and when they feel confident to do so, or members of the public requesting to smoke on the hospital grounds and signpost to specialist support.
* Understand and support the distinction between smoking tobacco and vaping, that vaping is substantially less harmful than smoking tobacco, but not safe. It is an effective intervention for people that smoke trying to become tobacco-free.
* Provide consistent advice and information about all treatments for tobacco dependency to people that smoke, including vaping, in line with this policy and the education and training on vaping, as appropriate and where they are trained to do so.
* Seek support and interventions not to smoke tobacco at work if they are a person that smokes.
* Support other members of staff that smoke to seek support and interventions not to smoke at work.

**5.5.3 NHS employees have access to:**

* + - Comprehensive digital support (6 months’ free access to the Smoke Free App, 24/7 access to a trained stop smoking advisor via this service and free home delivery of treatment for 12-weeks (nicotine products, vaping kits). This is accessible via a QR code.
    - Treatment and support from the hospital’s Treating Tobacco Dependency service.
    - Self-referral or GP referral to their local community stop smoking services, details available at (insert local details).

**5.6 Patients and Visitors**

* All patients and visitors will be asked to follow this Smokefree Policy. Patients and visitors will be made aware of the following (via admitting teams, pre-admission information provided in primary care, signage around the hospital and patrols of main entrances).
* Smoking tobacco is not permitted anywhere on the hospital grounds.
* Any person smoking on the hospital grounds may be asked to stop and signposted to the treatment and support needed to be tobacco-free on the hospital grounds.
* Any person that smokes will be informed about the hospital quit zones where nicotine products and vaping kits may be used to support people that smoke be tobacco-free on the hospital grounds.
* Any person smoking in vape friendly areas will be asked to stop to protect those trying to be tobacco-free.
* Patients and visitors will be made aware of information and where they can find vape friendly areas.
* Patients and visitors will be made aware of the above via information and sign posting around the Trust.

**6.** **Treating Tobacco Dependency**

**6.1** All patients, visitors, or staff that smoke can be helped to stop smoking through signposting and referral to the Trust’s specialist tobacco addiction treatment services, local community stop smoking service, local pharmacy, general practitioner, or Smoke Free App.

**6.2** Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) or stop smoking medications such as varenicline, bupropion, or cytisine can be used indoors and can lead to health benefits and increased staff productivity resulting from not smoking tobacco.

**6.3** Inpatients should be offered immediate access to nicotine replacement therapy, and other medications to help them not to smoke in line with the NHS GM Tobacco Treatment Prescribing Policy via the admitting clinical team.

**6.4** All patients that smoke admitted to the Trust will be automatically referred to the hospital-based tobacco dependency team who will offer further specialist support and treatment. Contact details for each site team will be readily accessible via hospital communications, visible signage, and information leaflets.

**7. Vaping**

**7.1** We are committed to delivering smokefree NHS grounds to protect all individuals and support people that smoke to stop. The harm of smoking tobacco comes from the chemicals produced when tobacco is burnt. Whereas nicotine, the addictive substance that smokers are dependent upon and crave, is relatively harmless.

**7.2** Vaping provides nicotine in a substantially less harmful way than burning tobacco. Vaping devices heat a liquid of nicotine to create a vapour that the user inhales. No tobacco is burnt. Unlike cigarettes, there is no side-stream effect from vaping, just the exhaled aerosol. Public Health England’s 2018 evidence review found that to date, there have been no identified health risks of passive vaping to bystanders.

**7.3** Vaping has a substantial evidence base that demonstrates they are an effective tool for smoking cessation and significantly more effective than nicotine replacement therapy (in randomised controlled trials and a Cochrane review). Therefore, to support the ambition of a truly smokefree NHS site, this policy makes a clear distinction between smoking and vaping. Smoking is not permitted anywhere on sites by any individual but any person that is trying to stop smoking is permitted to vape on the external grounds away from windows and doors.

**7.4** **There are many misconceptions about vaping, and we therefore commit to:**

* Producing a dedicated education and awareness package to present the evidence and reasons behind this policy and to provide staff with the tools to discuss vaping with people that smoke.
* Producing clear signage to inform the public and staff of the trusts policy on smoking and the trusts policy on vaping.

**7.5 Inpatients or staff that vape and have their own personal vaping equipment should follow the following guidance:**

* If a patient vapes, be aware that prohibiting use may cause a relapse back to smoking tobacco.
* Assess capacity and risk of vaping in the hospital environment.
* Discuss this Trust policy which permits vaping on the external hospital grounds and that smoking is not permitted anywhere on the hospital site.
* Ensure vaping is included in the patient’s care plan.
* Rechargeable devices should be charged by staff for the length of time recommended by the manufacturer and using the charging unit specified for the device.
* Encourage patients that vape to see the in-house Treating Tobacco Dependency Teams to offer behavioural change support and assistance with using the device correctly.

**7.6** We recognise the potential social nuisance and disturbance that could be caused by groups vaping together, congregating near entrances or blocking the passage of staff and other visitors. This is one of the reasons for the creation of exclusion zones for people that smoke trying to be tobacco-free on the hospital site. The implementation of this policy will include requesting any person vaping on the external grounds to respect others in the environment by not vaping near entrances or exits, or windows.

**7.7 Key statements that inform the trusts position on vaping:**

* Vaping is an effective intervention in the treatment of tobacco dependency.
* Vaping makes quitting smoking easier.
* It is only to be used in the treatment of tobacco dependency.
* Vaping is substantially less harmful than smoking tobacco, not safe.
* Vaping is not for young people.
* Vaping isn’t risk free – if you don’t smoke, don’t start vaping.
* Vaping is a NICE recommended intervention for tobacco dependency and should be available to all people that smoke.
* Vaping is recommended as a ‘very effective’ intervention for tobacco dependency in the Greater Manchester Medicines Management Group protocol - The Medical Management of Tobacco Dependency.
* People that previously smoked and have successfully switched to vaping, should ultimately try to stop vaping, but not if that leads to a relapse to smoking tobacco.
* It is illegal to supply or sell vaping kits to children under the age of 18.
* There will be no vaping company branding anywhere on the hospital site.

* Signage, communications and education will make clear these statements and ensure consistent terminology:

1. Substantially less harmful, not safe.
2. People that do not smoke should never start vaping.
3. Vaping is illegal in children under the age of 18.

**8. Policy Implementation**

**8.1** **To support the implementation of this policy, we will:**

* Provide a multi-layered signage, communications, education and information programme to explain the policy and the evidence behind it.
* Remove all smoking-related estate including shelters, ashtrays and cigarette bins
* Provide security-led, executive-led and senior clinician-led patrols of main entrances and quit zones with a standardised process, including the signposting to support and treatment to be tobacco-free on the hospital site, for discussing the policy with any person smoking on the hospital grounds.

**To ensure this policy is implemented staff must be clear about the guidelines set out below. To help staff members that smoke to support this policy, we will ensure ease of access to:**

* The Greater Manchester NHS staff digital treatment offer (Smoke Free App).
* The Trust’s specialist Treating Tobacco Dependency service.
* The relevant community stop smoking service.
* Equality Impact Assessment.

**8.2** We are committed to promoting equality and diversity in all areas of its activities. The Trust aims to ensure that everyone has equal access to its services and that there are equal opportunities in its employment and procedural documents, and decision making supports the promotion of equality and diversity. An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken prior to developing this policy, and the issues identified were incorporated as part of the policy.

**The Trust undertakes Equality Impact Assessments to ensure that its activities do not discriminate on the grounds of:**

* Religion or belief
* Sex or gender
* Marriage or civil partnership
* Age
* Sexual orientation
* Disability
* Pregnancy or maternity
* Race or ethnicity

**We also consider the impact on socially excluded groups and the impact on human rights:**

* Patients with visual or hearing impairment wishing to vape may find it difficult to identify where vaping is, and is not, permitted on hospital grounds.
* Patients with a disability wishing to vape may have difficulty in vaping away from exclusion zones.

**Mitigation action**

* All patients will be offered medicinal NRT to alleviate nicotine withdrawal and support them to be tobacco free.
* Vaping exclusion zones will be placed in accessible areas on the external grounds.
* A secondary means of communicating changes, beyond signage, may be required for those with hidden and visible disabilities or impairment.

**9. Consultation, Approval and Ratification Process**

**9.1** This policy has been co-produced with clinicians, the Greater Manchester Tobacco Control Make Smoking History programme. This policy is in line with the city-regional strategy and is a vanguard policy for Greater Manchester that will be used to standardise smokefree hospital site policy across all sites.

**9.2** **The following groups have been consulted regarding the development of this policy:**

* Workforce Policy Working Group
* Human Resources Teams
* Operational Managers
* Staff Networks
* Estates

**9.3** The policy will be approved by the Smokefree Steering Group and executively ratified at the Board of Directors.

**9.4** The GM policy will be reviewed every two years. This will take place sooner if employment legislation changes. The same stakeholder groups will be consulted, and the same approval ratification process will be followed.   
  
  
**10. Dissemination and Implementation**

**10.1 Dissemination**   
The new policy will be discussed with the Hospital’s communication channels. The education package will be hosted in the learning hub and categorised as a core module for all staff. A new signage and communication strategy will be used to support the implementation of this policy.

The policy will be placed on the Trust’s intranet to enable access by both managers and staff and old versions of the policy will be removed.

Communication will be included in hospital-wide communications to advise staff of the new policy and any relevant changes.

**10.2 Implementation of Procedural Documents**

Training will be provided through a bespoke educational package delivered through the hospital’s communications channels and the Trust’s online learning hub. Training and support will be provided by the Human Resources Team to ensure that managers involved in the process can follow/implement it effectively. Managers will be briefed at Divisional/department meetings by HR Teams.   
  
  
**11. Monitoring Compliance of the Smokefree Policy**

**11.1 Compliance will be assessed through several metrics:**

* Completion of educational training package by staff.
* Complaints received by the Trust regarding smoking on the hospital site.
* Complaints received about the social nuisance of vaping.
* Completion of the removal of all smoking estate from all hospital sites: ashtrays, smoking bins, smoking shelters
* Completion and implementation of exclusion zones on every hospital site.
* Staff feedback.
* Site visits and spot checks.
* Management of cigarette litter.

**11.2 Process for Monitoring Compliance and Effectiveness**

The Smokefree Steering Group will review the effectiveness of the policy with stakeholders through their workplan. Any shortfalls identified will be addressed in the reviewed policy.

**12. Standards and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)**

**12.1** The Smokefree Policy must be reviewed every year or when there is a requirement to make significant changes to the document or procedure.

**12.2** The Smokefree Policy will be made available on the intranet for all staff to access.

**12.3** There will be no smoking estate on the hospital grounds – ashtrays, smoking bins, smoking shelters.

**12.4** Completion rate of smokefree site e-learning module across all staff groups.

**13. References and Bibliography**

* 2021 NICE guidance on tobacco dependency
* RCP Report – Hiding in plain sight: treating tobacco dependency in the NHS
* RCP Report – Smoking and Health 2021: A coming of age for tobacco control