

# PROVIDING HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT LEADERSHIP THROUGH THE ADOPTION OF TOBACCO-FREE HOSPITALS

## POLICY STAKEHOLDERS HOSPITALS

### INTRODUCTION

Tobacco use remains the leading cause of death and disease in this country with over 443,000 deaths per year. Smoke-free policies decrease smoking rates. For example, Mayo Clinic reported a decrease from 17% to 12% employee smoking prevalence two years after the campus policy was implemented. According to American Hospital Association, 76% of hospitals nationally have gone 100% tobacco-free and 79% offer tobacco cessation programs to their employees. The American Hospital Association's *A Call to Action: Creating a Culture of Health*, issued in January 2011, recommends that hospitals "serve as a role model of health for the community." Within their Call to Action, the AHA notes that all hospitals can have smoke-free campuses and encourages hospitals to make smoking cessation mandatory for all.

### ADDRESSING TOBACCO IN THIS ENVIRONMENT

- There is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke; even brief exposure can be harmful. Children, pregnant women and adults with chronic diseases are most vulnerable to exposure.
- More and more healthcare facilities are adopting voluntary 100% tobacco-free campus policies, reinforcing their mission to promoting and protecting health. In addition to promoting the hospital's health mission, they also aid in community, employee and patient tobacco cessation efforts, lower maintenance costs and increase worker productivity.
- Thirdhand smoke is the tobacco smoke residue that remains after a cigarette, cigar or other combustible tobacco product has been extinguished. It contains toxins that can linger on hair, skin, clothing and other surfaces after smoking has ceased. Hospitals should include thirdhand smoke in their tobacco or fragrance policy to provide a protection against these toxins.

### POLICY IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

1. Establish a tobacco policy committee.
2. Develop policy language.
3. Train staff and educate clients on the new policy.
4. Prepare for policy launch, including enforcement planning and post signage around campus.
5. Implement the tobacco-free policy.
6. Maintain long-term tobacco-free success.

### WHAT IS A MODEL POLICY?

A model tobacco-free policy prohibits the smoking of, or use of, any tobacco products including but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, snuff, chewing tobacco, snus and electronic nicotine delivery systems, such as e-cigarettes, anywhere on the hospital's campus. This includes all organization-affiliated buildings, on all facility grounds, in all organization-owned or -leased vehicles, personal vehicles used in the course of work and at all sponsored events.

### RESOURCES

- Local District Tobacco Prevention Partner – usually located at a local Community Coalition, the DTPP can provide technical assistance on policy adoption and implementation and provide tips on creating tobacco-free environments.
- [www.MaineTobaccoFreeHospitals.org](http://www.MaineTobaccoFreeHospitals.org) - includes many resources available for download including policy adoption toolkit, template tobacco-free policy, and enforcement tips.
- Annual Gold Star Standards of Excellence program – conducted in the fall, this is an opportunity for hospitals to be recognized for efforts to adopt strong policies, procedures and treatment practices to address tobacco use.