



The Western Trust Smokefree policy aims to protect the health of staff, visitors, patients and service users. We have a duty to provide staff and patients with a clean, safe and healthy environment. Being smokefree protects the health of everyone, provides a clean and pleasant environment, improves service user / patient comfort and improves safety on the site.



FAQS

**What does the new
smokefree policy mean?**

In order to ensure a smokefree campus / environment, smoking is not permitted anywhere on the Western Trust grounds or premises – this includes buildings, entrances, pavements and car parks. No smoking on site for patients / service users, staff and all contracted workers.

**Why are we going
smokefree?**

To save lives over the next decade by reducing exposure to hazardous second-hand smoke;

To protect and improve the health of staff, patients / clients, visitors and contractors by countering the health risks caused by tobacco smoke;

Smoking can increase the risk of wound infections, post operative complications, prolong hospital stay and even lead to early readmission.

To assist both patients and staff who wish to stop smoking by ensuring smoking cessation support is widely available to staff, patients and clients;

To set an example of best practice;

To recognise a person's right to be protected from harm and to enjoy smoke-free air

To increase the benefits of smoke-free enclosed public places and workplaces for people trying to give up smoking so that they can succeed in an environment where social pressures to smoke are reduced.

**What is different from the
last smokefree policy?**

Smoking will not be permitted anywhere on its grounds or premises. This includes buildings, entrances, pavements and car parks. No smoking will be allowed on site for patients, service users, staff member of the public and contracted workers. There will be **NO** shelter for patients to smoke on site and staff will not be allowed to smoke in their cars on site.



What help is available to help me quit?

If you are admitted to hospital, please ask a member of staff to provide information and support to help you quit – we will prescribe nicotine replacement therapy to ease withdrawal symptoms and we will also refer you onto the Stop Smoking Team. We are encouraging patients who smoke to say “**YES**” to health care staff who will provide help and support to help them quit.

Western Trust employees who are smokers and want to quit can also receive help and support from the Western Trust Stop Smoking Team.

How is the smokefree policy going to be enforced?

Every Western Trust employee has a responsibility to ensure compliance with and implementation of the smokefree policy. Staff should take pride in working in a smokefree environment and ask anyone, they see smoking to “stub it out” and advise them about our smokefree policy and our stop smoking services. Our service users / patients also have a right to be cared for in a clean, safe and healthy environment.

If a member of staff sees someone smoking on site, the following actions are recommended, in a polite and courteous manner:

Draw the individual’s attention to the “no smoking” signs

Explain that the Trust is implementing a smoke free policy to ensure a safe working environment for everyone.

Advise on the stop smoking service available and give leaflet if appropriate.

Staff are not expected to get involved in conflict situations in order to enforce the policy. In the event of anyone becoming violent or aggressive due to the smoking restrictions, reference should be made to the Trust’s Zero Tolerance and Security Policy.

Any difficulties with implementation of the policy should be reported to your relevant line manager for appropriate action / reporting.



When will we become a smokefree Trust?

The Western Trust will become a smokefree Trust on Wednesday 12 March 2014, National No Smoking Day. We want to raise awareness in advance and to provide support to staff, patients and the public who want to stop smoking.

What will happen when a person who smokes is admitted to hospital?

Whilst in hospital, patients will be asked if they smoke. For patients who do smoke, they will be offered advice and support to quit including prescribing nicotine replacement therapy to ease withdrawal symptoms. They will also be referred to the Stop Smoking Team.

Research suggests that hospitalised patients are the most successful at quitting smoking – health care professionals can motivate positive change in unhealthy lifestyle behaviour.

What if a staff member wants time to leave Trust grounds to smoke?

Western Trust staff can leave Trust grounds to smoke during their official breaks – they must not be in uniform.

What should someone do if they see a member of staff smoking in their car?

Anyone smoking in their car will be asked to “stub out the cigarette” and given information about the stop smoking services available.

Any employee who breaches this Smoke-Free Policy will be reported to their line manager and may be disciplined in accordance with the Trust’s Disciplinary Procedure.

Have other Hospitals / Trusts become smokefree?

We realise that this smokefree campus will take time to achieve – we are aiming for 100% of what is achievable. There are many examples of other Acute Hospitals / PCT’s / Trusts introducing smoke free policies – for example Limerick General hospital seen a reduction in the number of people smoking on site, before the ban was introduced on average 19 people per day were observed smoking. After introduction of smokefree this was reduced to 8 per day.



What sanctions are going to be applied to anyone in breach of the policy?

Anyone smoking onsite will be asked to “stub out the cigarette” and given information about the stop smoking services available.

Any employee who breaches this Smoke-Free Policy will be reported to their line manager and may be disciplined in accordance with the Trust’s Disciplinary Procedure.

How does the smokefree policy impact on patients / service users accessing mental health facilities?

Smoking is about twice as common among people with mental health disorders and more so in those with severe disease. This leads to major reductions in life expectancy and quality of life and exacerbates poverty.

Individuals with a mental health disorder who smoke have an entitlement to stop smoking services just like other clients who access other health care services. Smoke free policies are essential in promoting smoking cessation in mental health settings.

All Western Trust employees care about their patients / service users however we do recognise the need to take account of the complexity of the care needs of people with mental health problems. Through funding made available by the Public Health Agency we will be employing a Stop Smoking Nurse based in Mental Health Services who will provide training and education for staff as well as support for service users in smoking cessation, temporary abstinence, nicotine replacement therapy and / or harm reduction.

What about e-cigs?

Electronic cigs or electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) are devices which deliver to the lungs of the user, a chemical mixture typically composed of nicotine, propylene glycol and other chemicals, although some products claim to contain no nicotine. The safety of ENDS has not been scientifically demonstrated yet, therefore the Western Trust smokefree policy prohibits the uses of E cigarettes on Trust buildings and grounds. This ban on the use of E cigs will be reviewed once further scientific evidence becomes available.

For more information you can contact the Western Trust Smokefree Team on 0800 917 9388

