

Guidance For Staff When Caring For Those Inpatients Within A Mental Health Or Learning Disability Facility Who Want To Smoke

Introduction

The Smokefree Policy for Greater Glasgow & Clyde (March 2014) notes that all hospital /care sites will aim to be completely smokefree by October 2015.

Currently mental health hospital and care sites have provision for smoking within designated external areas for inpatients. These designated areas will be withdrawn and mental health sites will be smoke free in accordance with board policy. As an interim measure, and to allow for a managed, phased approach to becoming smokefree within mental health sites this protocol sets out guidance for staff within those inpatient sites.

It is very important that patients are reminded about our Smokefree Policy. Persuading and supporting patients not to smoke during their admission is part of providing the best possible care and treatment. In addition to being extremely hazardous to physical health, smokers with mental health problems are 4 times more likely to develop COPD than other smokers, smoking as a stimulant can damage sleep patterns and aggravate feelings of stress. Smoking also interferes with engagement in therapeutic activities.

In terms of staff protection, NHS GGC is fully committed to protecting their staff from exposure to second hand smoke.

Guidance for all staff who deliver patient care:

- Assess smoking status on admission and document in notes.
- All smokers should be given brief advice to stop smoking. Inform patients that any level of smoking is detrimental to health and may impact on their recovery and they are strongly advised not to smoke.
- If the patient wants to stop smoking, advise them that the best way to do so is by getting support from specialist services and refer to our in patient Smokefree Mental Health Services by phoning **0141 211 6564**. This dedicated service for Mental Health is for both patients and staff.

Guidance For Staff When Caring For Those Inpatients Within A Mental Health Or Learning Disability Facility Who Want To Smoke

- If the patient is not ready to quit, they should be offered Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) to help manage their nicotine withdrawal during their stay in hospital (in line with the Standard Operating Procedure for Smokefree Services in Mental Health Hospitals). Record in notes.

If The Patient Is Not Ready To Quit And Is Unwilling To Use NRT:

- Remind patients of the NHS GGC Smokefree Policy – generally smoking is not allowed in NHS buildings or on NHS grounds. *An exemption permits mental health and learning disability inpatients only, to smoke in designated external areas – and only until October 2015*
- In addition, smoking is restricted in Forensic Services as follows:
smokefree between 11pm - 8am and 7 smokefree hours between 8am - 11pm
- Where the patient is unable to stop smoking after having been advised to do so, local arrangements may have to be made to accompany that patient to the smoking area following an appropriate risk assessment and risk management plan. This should not be done lightly and must take account of associated risks and prescribed observation levels as detailed within the Safe & Supportive Observation Policy. *This only applies where there is an external smoking area within the grounds and up to October 2015.*
- External Smoking shelters should be secure, only accessible from the clinical area and visible for staff to provide appropriate levels of observation from outside the actual smoking shelter. This will prevent staff having to be in close proximity to patients while they smoke. *This, too, only applies where such a shelter is in place and up to October 2015*

Staff should encourage all patients to engage in the health and wellbeing culture within Mental Health Services. As part of this, staff should strongly discourage smokers from leaving the ward for the sole purpose of smoking.

In this situation - and only until October 2015 - staff supporting the patient to access a designated external smoking area should maintain enhanced clinical observations from a position where they are not directly exposed to second hand smoke.