



5.0 Human Resources

5.8 Wellness and Safety

5.8.2 Smoke Free Premises Policy

1.0 Purpose

Smoking is the biggest single cause of ill health and premature death in the country. The adverse effects of tobacco smoke on public health, whether actively or passively inhaled, are well documented. For over a decade, smoking has not been permitted within Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA) owned or operated facilities. In addition, the sale and promotion of tobacco products on VIHA owned, operated or leased premises is prohibited and no contributions are accepted from the tobacco industry.

VIHA also has an obligation to its workforce, patients/residents/clients and public to minimize exposure to second-hand smoke, particularly at entrances and exits to facilities.

This smoking control policy is designed to:

- protect any person entering and leaving VIHA facilities;
- protect both smokers and non-smokers from the danger to their health through exposure to second-hand smoke;
- set an example to other employers and workforces particularly in the health care field;
- demonstrate health authority leadership in health promotion; and
- comply with legislation to protect workers from second-hand smoke.

It is the responsibility of the VIHA workforce to be leaders in modeling healthy lifestyles to our patients, clients and residents. As such VIHA employees, physicians and volunteers are encouraged to extend the spirit of this policy to any location outside of VIHA owned, operated or leased premises to demonstrate commitment and leadership to protect, promote and improve the health of their clients and the population.

2.0 Policy

Smoking will not be permitted on the grounds of any facility leased, owned, or operated by VIHA after March 1, 2008 to meet the standard set down by the provincial government.

Who:

This policy shall apply to all persons accessing VIHA premises, including: VIHA employees, physicians, volunteers, patients, residents, clients, visitors, contractors, students, fellows, employees of academic institutions in partnership with VIHA, and any other persons using the VIHA facilities and/or services.

Affiliated Facilities:

All future contracts with VIHA affiliated facilities shall require the agency or facility providing clinical services to adopt a similar smoke free policy.

Accountability:

Compliance with this policy is the responsibility of all VIHA employees, supported and monitored by VIHA management.

3.0 Procedure

3.1 Executive Management Committee must ensure that mechanisms are in place to:

- ensure that staff patients, volunteers, visitors and contractors are made aware of this policy;
- ensure that this policy is adhered to by staff and that resources are available to ensure effective implementation; and
- comply fully with the policy and provide a suitable role model for staff and patients.

3.2 Senior Leadership Team must:

- ensure that managers are aware of the policy and are supported in enforcing the policy with staff; and
- comply fully with the policy and provide a suitable role model for staff and patients.

3.3 Line Managers must:

- ensure that all staff reporting to them adhere to this policy;
- ensure that any staff wishing to quit smoking will be allowed to access recognized stop smoking sessions during work time;
- record as authorized absence any stop smoking sessions held on site attended by an employee;
- ensure that staff are fully supported in reminding other people of the no smoking policy; and
- comply fully with the policy and provide a suitable role model for staff and patients.
- Non-compliance with this policy will result in disciplinary action as established by Human Resources for all policies.
- Employees will be subject to supportive, but corrective approach to address violations of this policy.

3.4 Staff

Staff must comply fully with this policy and provide a suitable role model for other staff, patients and visitors.

Staff will not be required to accompany patients/residents to a smoking area.

Smoking cessation supports within approved budgetary allocations will be provided to VIHA employees, physicians, patients, residents and clients to assist them in adapting to a smoke-free environment.

Details of this policy and support available for smokers will be routinely covered in an employee's orientation. Information about VIHA's smoke free premises policy will be available in the patient and staff handbook, in department safety policies, and on the website.

3.5 Patients/Visitors

Coming into hospital presents many patients with an ideal opportunity to stop smoking. VIHA is committed to providing support and advice to patients who wish to take advantage of this opportunity.

Where possible, patients will be informed of VIHA's smoke free premises policy prior to receiving a service. All documents sent out or given to patients, including outpatient appointments and admission paperwork will include information about VIHA's smoke free premises policy.

Staff should ascertain the smoking status of patients when they register so that any issues regarding smoking can be addressed as early as possible. Patients will also be advised of the policy on admission to VIHA premises and via communication methods such as the website and patient information brochures.

Staff members must inform patients that smoking is not allowed on VIHA property. Patients who do smoke must be referred to relevant help that they can access while in a VIHA facility. However, staff are not expected to enter into any confrontation that may put their personal safety at risk.

No member of staff will be disciplined for failing to inform patients or visitors of the policy.

A zero tolerance approach will be applied to any patients or visitors who become abusive when reminded of the policy.

All others who violate this policy will be reminded of the policy and asked to comply or to leave the premises.

3.6 Signage

Appropriate signage communicating the smoke-free policy will be placed prominently and maintained in all facilities and on all premises.

3.7 Special Considerations

Special considerations to the following constituents may be made for selected client populations in accordance with local bylaws and regulations:

➤ **Mental Health and Addictions inpatients/clients**

Facilities providing services to mental health and/or addictions inpatient clients may be afforded different considerations as to location of the perimeter zone but will need to meet requirements of all local bylaws or legislation. This consideration will not apply to visitors, contractors and staff.

➤ **Residential clients/Assisted Living clients**

Certain types of residential accommodation may be afforded different considerations as to location of the perimeter zone but will need to meet requirements of all local bylaws or legislation. This consideration will not apply to visitors, contractors and staff.

➤ **Hospice/Palliative Care clients/End of Life patients**

Hospice/palliative care clients/end of life patients may be afforded different considerations as to location of the perimeter zone but will need to meet requirements of all local bylaws or legislation. This consideration will not apply to visitors, contractors and staff.

➤ **Ceremonial Use of Tobacco**

All ceremonial use of tobacco products will be permitted as per the Provincial *Tobacco Control Act*.

4.0 Definitions

Employee:

For the purposes of this policy "Employee" includes:

- all direct employees of VIHA;
- volunteers;
- medical practitioners, including midwives, dental and allied staff;
- residents; and
- students.

Affiliated Facilities:

Facilities that are contracted by VIHA to provide clinical services to patients or clients.

Premises:

A tract of land with buildings thereon considered as property; a building or part of a building usually with its appurtenances (as grounds); house or building, together with its land and outbuildings, occupied by a business or considered in an official context, in and around buildings on an identified piece of property.

Leased Premises:

All or part of a building under a contract (a lease) for a consideration (usually rent), which gives VIHA possession of the real property for a specified term.

Smoke/Smoking:

Inhaling, exhaling, burning or carrying of a lighted cigarette, cigar, pipe or other lighted smoking equipment burning tobacco or any other substance.

Special Considerations:

Involve the unique nature of the implementation/change management strategies and implementation timelines, and/or the creation of an outdoor designated smoking area for the specified patient population.

Populations to Receive Special Considerations:

Mental Health and Addiction Clients who are in patients in an acute setting or a residential setting

Residents of a long term care facility

Patients who are in a facility receiving palliative care

5.0 References

VIHA Policies

- 5.8.1 Wellness and Safety: General Policy
- VIHA Policy: 5.6.4 Performance Management – Corrective Discipline Policy

Provincial Acts, Statutes and Regulations

- Worksafe BC Occupational Health and Safety Regulations revised October 2004: Section 4.81
- Tobacco Control Act