


Health Authority – Abu Dhabi		هيئة الصحة - أبوظبي
Division/Department/Section: PPR/HCP Subject: Smoke Free Health Care Facilities in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi	Reference Number: PPR/HCP/P0008/07 Issue Date: May 2007 Revision Date: May 2009 Version: I	


1. PURPOSE

There is an increasing recognition of the need to restrict smoking in the health care facilities (HCFs) for medical, legal and financial reasons, including recognition of the health effects of passive smoking, and encouraging smoking cessation as part of health promotion in the community.

Health care facilities are a vital and often central part of our communities. As health care institutions it is important that we educate and model healthy behaviors for our communities. With this in mind, implementation of a smoke-free environment sends a clear message of the commitment to create and sustain healthy communities. Additionally, a smoke-free environment encourages both employees and patients to quit smoking.


Medical evidence clearly shows that smoking is harmful to the health of smokers. Medical research has also established that second-hand smoke is a significant health hazard to non-smokers, which, if not controlled, has short-term effects such as irritation to the eyes, throat and respiratory tract, as well as long-term effects including impaired lung function and lung cancer. Nicotine, a key ingredient in tobacco products, is an addictive drug. Tobacco use by and around children and adolescents is of particular concern due to increased risk for addiction and passive exposure. Smoking is a known cause of cancer, heart disease, stroke and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. Special dangers exist for specific subpopulations of smokers such as pregnant women who suffer higher rates of spontaneous abortions, stillbirths, premature births and low birth weight babies.

The purpose of this policy is to communicate Health Authority-Abu Dhabi (HAAD) position on smoking and the use and sale of tobacco products in the health care facility premises and to create a smoke free health care environment. HAAD as a leader in health care has an obligation to its patients and to the public to strongly assert the risks of tobacco use. Establishments of smoke free environments make such a statement. The use of tobacco in the health care setting compromises the image of a healthy environment. The objective of this smoking policy is also to protect non-smokers from exposure to second-hand smoke, thereby enhancing the air quality of the health care setting. It is also anticipated that the health care facilities will be recognized as pioneers of this initiative and will take a leadership role in promoting smoke free environment for the community, public places and other organizations.

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2. POLICY STATEMENT

- 2.1. HAAD has adopted a smoke-free environment policy. Smoking is prohibited both indoors and outdoors on all properties owned by the Public and Private Health Care facilities in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.
- 2.2. HAAD prohibits smoking in all HCFs that are directly or indirectly related to patient care and services in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.
- 2.3. HAAD supports the treaty for the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC). UAE is a member of this treaty signed. This treaty is an agreement/ legal obligation of UAE to reduce tobacco-related deaths and disease, HAAD policy on smoke free environment is a step toward the implementation and compliance of that treaty.
- 2.4. HAAD calls on all HCFs in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi to implement and enforce restrictions and ban on tobacco use on the facility and its premises making them 100% tobacco/smoke-free premises.
- 2.5. HAAD also mandates that the HCFs should have no direct association with organizations involved in the manufacture of tobacco products and urges to avoid such association.
- 2.6. The policy also prohibits the use of tobacco products in all areas belonging to the HCF, clinics, patient rooms, wards, lab, pharmacy, offices, meeting rooms, halls, lobby, cafeteria, shops, storage areas, bathrooms, corridor, gym, stairs, parking lot within the premises of the HCF's and outside the 100 meter vicinity of the HCF.
- 2.7. The policy also prohibits the use of tobacco products in meetings, conferences, workshops, training programs and such sponsored by the health care organizations.
- 2.8. HAAD encourages the use of smoke free meeting and conference space even outside HCFs.

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2.9. The policy also bans the sale of tobacco products in the HCF’s premises (cigarette vending machines shall not be installed and existing machines shall be removed.)

2.10. There should be signs “NO SMOKING” in the HCFs posted on all prominent locations that shall indicate clearly the presence of a smoke free facility.

2.11. It is mandated that all HCFs in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, will become smoke free as of September 2007 or 6 months from the date of approval of this policy.

2.12. Compliance to this policy is mandatory for all Private and Public HCFs, pharmacies including administrative and corporate offices, insurance companies etc, which is directly or indirectly responsible for providing health care services. Non compliance will result in penalties which can range from warning, fine to closure of the facility.

3. SCOPE

To create a smoke free health care environment

4. TARGET AUDIENCE

Health care staff, patients, and visitors


5. RESPONSIBILITY

Health care facility management to implement the policy; staff, patients and visitors to comply with the Policy.


6. PROCEDURE

To Implement a Smoke Free Environment (SFE)


6.1. Announce management’s commitment to create a smoke-free environment.

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- 6.2.** Assign responsibility and authority for coordinating the implementation of the SFE to an appropriate member of the senior management.
- 6.3.** Create a task force to plan implementation of the new smoke-free environment.
- 6.3.1. Include persons who smoke, nonsmokers, and former smokers.
- 6.3.2. Develop a timetable. Set a specific date to be smoke-free (September 2007 or 6 months from the date of approval of this policy).
- 6.4.** Gather information including:
- 6.4.1. Smoke-free policies implemented by other organizations.
- 6.4.2. Facilities (e.g., physical constraints or leases that may influence policy decisions).
- 6.4.3. Employees (percentage of nonsmokers and smokers, level of enthusiasm).
- 6.4.4. Existing smoking policy.
- 6.4.5. Legal issues (legislation, regulation, and other contracts).
- 6.5.** Draft the implementation plan to phase in the smoke-free environment. Have it reviewed and refined by the appropriate individuals and groups.
- 6.6.** Announce the policy and implementation plan to all employees through a letter from the Chief Executive Officer/head of the facility.
- 6.6.1. Human resource will communicate the policy to:
- 6.6.1.1. In all new recruitment advertisements/postings of the HCF.
- 6.6.1.2. All new applicants will be informed of the smoke free policy of the organization prior to accepting offer at the HCF.
- 6.6.1.3. During the new employee orientation
- 6.6.1.4. Employees who are in violation of the policy, smoking will be subject to disciplinary action by the human resources (first time warning followed by penalty/fine, based on the policy of the health care institution, after 3 episodes of penalty/fine, HCF should take more aggressive disciplinary action as suspension/ termination).

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- 6.7. Assign staff to approach employees smoking or using tobacco products in the HCF and remind them of the policy and complete an incident report for supervisor follow up.
- 6.8. All employees of the HCF are authorized and should be encouraged to communicate this policy with courtesy and diplomacy especially with regard to patients and visitors.
- 6.9. Educate employees, patients, visitors and guests through:
- 6.9.1 Awareness sessions
 - 6.9.2 Training courses for employees for conducting smoking cessation clinics/programs/services
 - 6.9.3 Feedback sessions for employees
 - 6.9.4 Newsletter, staff emails
 - 6.9.5 Signs, displays, leaflets
 - 6.9.6 Flyers/posters in waiting areas
 - 6.9.7 News releases to local media
 - 6.9.8 All HCF staff should participate in mass awareness campaign against cigarette smoking
- 6.10. Offer smoking cessation programs to employees and their families or refer to programs (as clinics in Preventive Medicine) at least 6 months prior to implementation day.
- 6.11. Obtain insurance coverage of at least one cessation drug.
- 6.12. Have the pharmacy carry cessation pharmaceutical inventories.
- 6.13. Make changes to facilitate the smoke-free environment.
- 6.13.1 Install “Smoke-free Area”, “Smoke-free Environment - No Smoking in this Outside Location”, or “No Smoking” signs.
 - 6.13.2 The signs must be in English and Arabic and must be in accordance to Appendix A of this policy. Signs will be provided for free by the Health Authority in various sizes and shapes (plastic, adhesive) or as electronic documents (eg., HCPF-files).
 - 6.13.3 Remove ash receptacles.

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6.14. Enforce the policy from day one of implementation.


6.15. Evaluate and refine policy.

7. DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS


Health care facility (HCF)	Any Public/private facility, organization directly/indirectly providing health care or services, which will include clinics, centers, hospitals, administrative offices, corporate offices, insurance providers, pharmacies etc.
HCFs	Health care facilities
HAAD	Health Authority - Abu Dhabi.
SFE	Smoke-free Environment

8. CROSS REFERENCE

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6. UAE Ministry of Health (MOH). Ministry Circular #1, 1996, Banning Smoking in all the Health Care facilities under domain of MOH.

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7. Circular No. (HPR/4/2006) – Applying the environmental safety issues in health facilities, 22.03.2006
8. HAAD Health, Safety, Environmental & Security Manual, Part II, HSE-VII-007: Fire Safety / Smoking Policy, November 2004

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9. APPENDIX I

