

# Smoke-Free Premises

## 1. Introduction

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### *Description*

Smoking is the number one preventable cause of death in Canada and is responsible for billions in annual health care costs. Second-hand tobacco smoke is a carcinogen and there is no safe level of exposure. Smoking bans in public places are recognized as the most effective means for reducing exposure to second-hand smoke; they have been shown to decrease tobacco consumption, reduce serious health-related hospital admissions, increase quit attempts, lengthen the time between relapse, and boost quit rates.

Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) is committed to ensuring a safe, healthy, and clean environment for all. The purpose of this policy is to:

- Protect patients, clients, staff, volunteers and the general public from the harmful effects of smoking and exposure to second-hand smoke;
- Encourage uptake of smoking cessation programs available through the VCH Tobacco Reduction program; and
- Define the roles and responsibilities of individuals in promoting and maintaining VCH's smoke-free policy.

### *Scope*

This smoke-free policy applies to all Persons in or on all VCH owned and/or operated premises, facilities, and grounds. All persons in or on VCH contracted/funded facilities will be subject to the “no smoking” or comparable policies of those sites.

### *Exceptions*

The exception to this policy is the cultural and ceremonial use of Aboriginal traditional medicines such as tobacco, sage, cedar, and sweetgrass in a designated ceremonial site separate from other patients. For more information, please see related policies under Section 3 below.

## 2. Policy

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### **2.1. VCH is a Smoke-Free Organization**

Smoking of tobacco, marijuana, and other products (including e-cigarettes) is prohibited in or on all VCH owned and/or operated premises, facilities, and grounds (for exceptions to this policy, please see Exceptions above).

VCH will work with VCH funded/contracted facilities to ensure that they develop and implement an appropriate “no smoking” policy consistent with the principles of this policy.

### 2.1.1. Medicinal Marijuana

If a patient, client or resident is using medically prescribed marijuana (i.e. they have a Government of Canada certificate for legal possession and use), they have two options for use:

- a) Leave VCH property and smoke in a location where they do not affect other people; or
- b) Use oral nabilone: a formulary alternative for those patients who cannot leave the hospital to smoke their marijuana.

## 2.2. ***No Smoking Advertising and Funding***

VCH will advertise itself as a smoke-free environment (e.g. employment postings, advertisements, displays, etc.).

VCH will not accept funding, monies or gifts in any form from a tobacco company.

## 2.3. ***Procedures***

Procedures for this policy will be developed and implemented by the Tobacco Reduction team including Tobacco Reduction Coordinators with the assistance of other VCH staff and managers.

## 2.4. ***Responsibilities***

Responsibility for this policy is shared between Staff, management, members of the VCH Tobacco Reduction team, facilities, and security.

### 2.4.1. Staff

Staff will inform patients and visitors on VCH's premises of the smoke-free policy. Staff will refer patients to appropriate assistance such as smoking cessation programs.

### 2.4.2. Management

Management will support the smoke-free policy by allocating the required time, financial, human and other resources required for maintaining and enforcing this policy.

### 2.4.3. VCH Tobacco Reduction

VCH's Tobacco Reduction Team including Tobacco Reduction Coordinators are responsible for procedures and implementation of this policy.

Tobacco Reduction Coordinators are responsible for leading the Tobacco Reduction Strategy for a geographic portion of VCH. They assess the need for tobacco reduction programs and plans, implement and evaluate these programs and plans.

#### 2.4.4. Facilities

Facilities are responsible for ensuring that appropriate signage is displayed to notify patients/visitors and remind staff of VCH's smoke-free policy.

#### 2.4.5. Security

Security will notify anyone found smoking (on VCH owned and/or operated premises, facilities, and grounds) smokers of the policy and inform them of the boundaries of VCH premises. Security may escort visitors who refuse to comply with the smoke-free policy from VCH premises.

#### 2.4.6. Housekeeping

Housekeeping is responsible for monitoring and cleaning entranceways and patios on a weekly basis for the removal of cigarette butts.

### 2.5. **Compliance**

VCH encourages all persons on VCH owned and/or operated premises, facilities, and grounds to respect the smoke-free policy for the benefit and health of all of our staff, visitors, patients, clients, volunteers, and the general public.

Anyone smoking on VCH owned and/or operated premises will be asked to leave VCH property. Where an individual fails to comply with this request, additional actions may be taken as noted below.

#### 2.5.1. Expectations of Staff, Volunteers and Contractors

Staff smoking on VCH owned and/or operated premises, facilities, and grounds will be subject to disciplinary consequences commencing with a written warning and a request for the staff member to participate in a stop-smoking/nicotine program, where applicable.

Should there be further violations of this policy; Staff will be subject to additional disciplinary actions.

Evidence of full participation in an appropriate stop-smoking program will be considered by VCH in the issuance of further discipline.

Volunteers refusing to comply will be reported to the Supervisor responsible for Volunteer Services.

On-site contractors refusing to comply with the policy will be reported to the Manager responsible for on-site construction/renovation projects. Penalties may be issued for non-compliance.

#### 2.5.2. Expectations of Visitors, Patients and Clients

Visitors refusing to comply with the policy will be reported to Security or Site Designate and asked to leave VCH property.

Patients and clients refusing to comply will be reported to Charge Nurse or Designate. Continued non-compliance will be reported to responsible Physician or Designate.

### 3. References

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#### *Tools, Forms and Guidelines*

- [VCH Regional Tobacco Strategy](#)

#### *Related Policies*

- Cultural and Ceremonial Use of Tobacco and Smudging Medicines (*policy in development*)

#### *Keywords*

Smoke, smoking, cigarette, cigar, pipe, tobacco, marijuana, sage, cedar, sweetgrass, ceremony

#### *Definitions*

“**Person(s)**” means all Staff (as defined below) as well as visitors, clients, residents, and patients on VCH property.

“**Smoke**” or “**Smoking**” means inhaling, exhaling, burning, carrying or having possession of a burning or lighted cigarette, cigar or pipe, or other lighted smoking equipment, burning tobacco or any other substance that is lighted, vapourized or heated.

“**Staff**” means all employees (including management and leadership), Medical Staff Members (including physicians, midwives, dentists and Nurse Practitioners), residents, fellows and trainees, students, volunteers, contractors and other service providers engaged by VCH.

#### *Questions*

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