

FAQs

Mental Health Services going smokefree

27 May 2010

When is Specialist Mental Health Services (SMHS) going smokefree?

From 1 July 2010 no-one will be able to smoke on SMHS grounds

Why is SMHS going smokefree?

The CDHB wants to provide a smokefree environment in Specialist Mental Health Services. One of every two smokers will die of a smoking related illness. The SMHS and the CDHB can no longer be seen to condone or support smoking – as it impacts so badly on health

Which facilities will be affected?

All SMHS services will be smokefree from 1 July, including the Hillmorton Hospital, The Princess Margaret Hospital and in the community.

Where will I be able to smoke?

You will have to move on to public land to smoke.

Will my visitors be able to smoke?

Visitors will not be able to smoke and will be asked to leave their cigarettes at home when they visit. Visitors are encouraged to use Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) patches, gum, lozenges or other medications to assist in preventing cravings during the visiting period. These are available from the family doctor or nurse, or by phoning Quitline on 0800 778 778.

What support will be available for me to be smokefree?

When you are admitted, you will be offered NRT (patches, gums, lozenges etc) which will relieve the cravings to smoke. It is important to take the NRT before strong cravings start, as it is most effective in preventing cravings. It is also important that you let staff know if you start to experience cravings, to ensure that you are receiving the right amount of NRT. Staff will also be able to provide support and advice around changing the rituals associated with smoking, how to deal with stress and crises without smoking, and the triggers which might set up the desire to smoke.

Who should I talk to if I need help to be smokefree in SMHS facilities?

You should work closely with your case manager to develop a plan to support you being smokefree. Your consultant will also provide support around being smokefree. If you are experiencing difficulties, you can speak to any of the nursing staff. Often, urges to smoke pass within five minutes or so, if you are using NRT to deal with the nicotine addiction, so calling on a support person to help you through that period is important.

Will there be support for me to stay smokefree at home if I decide I want this?

If you decide you want to quit smoking and stay smokefree permanently, you will be referred to a quit programme in the community when you are discharged. Your case manager will also be able to provide you with support. Your family and friends can also help you by providing support and maintaining a smokefree environment.