

Greater Dayton Area Hospital Association

Official Position Statement on Tobacco-free Campus Policies

Background:

Members of the Greater Dayton Area Hospital Association (GDAHA) recognize the serious healthcare issues associated with tobacco use. These issues include risks to users, the individuals exposed to secondhand smoke, and the environment.

It is well documented that tobacco is the leading cause of preventable death in the United States. Tobacco causes the death of more than 53,000 Ohioans annually and is the root cause of many illnesses and lost productivity. Secondhand smoke contains more than 4,000 chemicals and has been attributed to about 3,000 lung cancer deaths in non-smokers each year. Recently, the Surgeon General confirmed the findings of the 1964 Surgeon General's report on tobacco and detailed the effects of secondhand smoke. The report called for a workplace ban on smoking.

Many hospitals in the United States and in Ohio have implemented tobacco-free campus policies. Implementation of these policies often includes tobacco cessation programming, education, and assistance. Employees, patients, and visitors are provided with support such as the Ohio Tobacco Quit Line (800-QUIT-NOW) and nicotine replacement therapy.

As leaders in the community and providers of healthcare, GDAHA members are committed to establishing and maintaining a healthy and safe environment. While many GDAHA members have implemented strong tobacco use policies in an effort to protect the lives of their employees, medical staff, patients, visitors, and the community, the group recognizes that tobacco-free campuses are the best practice in the interest of the health and wellness of the community.

Position:

The Greater Dayton Area Hospital Association believes that all member hospitals should implement a tobacco-free campus policy by January 1, 2008.

Tobacco-free campus policies prohibit employees, patients, and visitors (including volunteers, vendors, contractual workers) from using any tobacco products (smoking or smokeless) anywhere on the property of the medical facility, including sidewalks, walkways, driveways, and parking lots under the hospital's ownership or control. This applies to hospital owned or leased vehicles and prohibits employees from using tobacco during their work shift.