



Smoke Free Policy – Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What is happening?

From 31st March 2015 all NHS Dumfries and Galloway sites (buildings and grounds) will become smoke free. This is a requirement set out in the Scottish Government's Tobacco Control Strategy 2013-2018.

Q. Why totally free smoke free sites?

We are a health promoting organisation and are committed to protecting and improving the health and wellbeing of all patients, visitors and staff. Allowing smoking on our sites is not consistent with this message.

Q. Where/what is included in the Smoke Free Policy?

- All buildings e.g. offices, hospitals, health centres, cabins and staff residencies including communal areas
- All vehicles e.g. pool cars, lease and privately own cars, light and heavy goods vehicles
- All grounds e.g. gardens, walkways, car parks, staff residential communal areas

Q. Who does the policy apply to?

- All NHS Dumfries and Galloway staff, patients, visitors and contractors

Q. What is wrong with having smoking shelters?

We don't have designated smoking shelters as our hospital sites are completely smoke free. As a health promoting organisation it is not appropriate to have smoking shelters as it implies that we condone smoking.

Q. Don't staff and patients have right to smoke?

There is no legal right to smoke. However, we do have the right to create a smoke free environment to protect people from the dangers of second hand smoke.

Q. What about patients who need to smoke?

There is no obligation to permit people to smoke. Nothing harmful will happen to someone if they do not smoke. They may experience symptoms of nicotine withdrawal, but this can be managed with nicotine replacement therapy which will be available during their hospital stay.

Q. Can I smoke in my uniform?

Smoking in uniform/working clothes will not be permitted during working hours

Q. Can I smoke in my car?

- No member of staff will be permitted to smoke in NHS owned vehicles
- No member of staff will be permitted to smoke in lease vehicles during working hours
- Staff will not be permitted to smoke in privately owned vehicles while these vehicles are on NHS grounds or while using these on business when carrying a passenger as this constitutes the passenger's workplace

Q. Are there any exemptions?

Mental health sites – at present Mental Health sites are exempt from the Scottish Government requirement to achieve smoke free grounds by 31 March 2015. Mental Health Services will continue to actively support choices of harm reduction and smoking cessation.

Q. What is the ruling on e-cigarettes?

E-cigarettes should be treated in exactly the same way as any other form of smoking, i.e. they are not permitted to be smoked in NHS buildings or grounds. The aspect of the policy regarding e-cigarettes will require to be routinely updated as any changes in the regulation of e-cigarettes occurs

Q. I don't work on a hospital site – Does the smoking ban on NHS Dumfries and Galloway grounds apply to me?

Yes. The Smoke Free Grounds Policy applies to all NHS Dumfries and Galloway premises, not just the main hospital sites.

Q. My job is really stressful – shouldn't I be given the opportunity to smoke when I am stressed?

As members of staff we have a responsibility to promote health and wellbeing and maintain a smoke free environment at all times. This means that there are no exceptions to the ban on staff smoking on NHS Dumfries and Galloway premises regardless of what role you are in. Staff can seek help with their smoking from the following:

D&G Smoking Matters Service

T: 0845 602 6861

NHS Dumfries and Galloway Occupational Health Service T: 01387 244626

Q. Can I take a break to leave the site and have a cigarette if I make sure I work the time back at the end of the day?

No. There are no such things as cigarette breaks. Members of staff can go off site (and not in uniform) to smoke during their normal unpaid breaks e.g. lunchtime, in the same way they can for any other reason, but they cannot use their working time in this way.

Q. What about the safety implications for staff who work nights and want to leave the site to smoke during their break?

A member of staff can choose to leave a site during their unpaid break as long as they realise that they do so at their own risk. This applies whether they are leaving a site for a cigarette or for any other reason.

Q. What will happen if staff continue to smoke on NHS Dumfries and Galloway grounds?

Creating a smoke free NHS Dumfries and Galloway means that we need to focus on changing the culture through the provision of help and support, rather than focusing on disciplining staff. If someone is reported or caught smoking the first step will be for them to be supported by their manager. They should be encouraged to use the **D&G Smoking Matters Service – Telephone: 0845 602 6861** to help them to manage their smoking within the context of the Smoke Free Policy.

If, after an informal period of discussion and support the member of staff continues to breach the policy this will be dealt with by the line manager under the Management of Employee Conduct PIN.

Q. What about contractors and other visitors?

Contractors and other visitors breaching the policy will be reminded about the importance of compliance with the policy and will be guided to non-NHS grounds where they are permitted to smoke. Similar to staff, they can also access smoking cessation services from the D&G Smoking Matters Service.

Q. How can I help make the smoke free grounds policy work?

To ensure that NHS Dumfries and Galloway is a credible and effective advocate for healthy living, all staff and managers have a responsibility to support the implementation of this policy.

If a member of staff feels comfortable challenging patients or visitors who are smoking the suggested approach is:

- 1) Politely introduce yourself and explain that you work for NHS Dumfries and Galloway
- 2) Explain that smoking is not permitted anywhere on NHS Dumfries and Galloway grounds
- 3) You may hand the individual a 'Think Again' card which states the smoke free policy and highlights the area covered by the smoke free zone

If you see another staff member smoking:

- 1) Politely introduce yourself and explain that you also work for NHS Dumfries and Galloway
- 2) Remind the individual(s) that they are no longer permitted to smoke anywhere on NHS Dumfries and Galloway grounds

- 3) Politely ask them to extinguish their cigarette and remind them that if you see them smoking on NHS Dumfries and Galloway grounds again you are obligated to report them to their line manager but you prefer not to have to do this

Q. Will staff get into trouble if they challenge managers who are not complying with the policy?

No. This is a NHS Dumfries and Galloway wide policy and is therefore applicable to everyone irrespective of Band.

Q. What if a challenge to a smoker results in aggression or violence?

Although members of staff are asked to politely remind people that smoking on NHS Dumfries and Galloway grounds is not allowed, this should only be done if you feel confident to do so.

Under no circumstances should a confrontational attitude be adopted or allowed to develop. If verbal or physical abuse occurs as a consequence of employees implementing the Smoke Free Grounds Policy, the perpetrator (whether they are staff, a patient or a visitor) will be dealt with in accordance with the NHS Dumfries and Galloway Violence and Aggression Policy and the Management of Employee Conduct PIN.

Dated: 3rd December 2014

