

## **Guidance For Staff When Caring for Inpatients who Want to Smoke**

### **Introduction**

It is very important that patients are reminded about our Smokefree Policy. In the NHS Highland Smokefree Policy, smoking is not permitted anywhere on NHS grounds or in NHS buildings; this includes car parks, doorways and entrances. There is an exemption for mental health patients in New Craigs Hospital and Argyll and Bute Hospital which allows them to smoke in designated external areas. NHS Highland care homes are also exempt.

Persuading and supporting patients not to smoke during their admission is part of providing the best possible care and treatment. Smoking can delay their recovery, prolong the healing of wounds and possibly increase their length of stay.

### **Guidance**

- Assess smoking status on admission and document in notes
- All smokers should be given brief advice to stop smoking. Inform patients that any level of smoking is detrimental to health and may impact on their recovery and they are strongly advised not to smoke.
- If the patient wants to stop smoking, advise them that the best way to stop smoking is by getting support from specialist services and refer to our Smokefree Hospital Service (appendix 1).
- If the patient is not ready to quit, they should be offered and then prescribed Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) to help manage their nicotine withdrawal during their stay in hospital. Record in notes.
- Remind patients of the NHS Highland Smokefree Policy – smoking is forbidden in NHS buildings or on NHS grounds and the use of e-cigarettes is also forbidden across all sites.
- If a patient insists on leaving against the advice of staff, then they should be reminded that they are wholly responsible for anything that may occur as a result of their action and this should be documented in the patient's notes.
- There is a misconception that asking patients to sign a disclaimer before leaving the ward to smoke is acceptable practice. It is not. No disclaimer should be in use in any ward or department

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