

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Creating a Clean Environment... Tobacco-Free Campus

- Effective July 7, 2007 -

**Q) Why is the decision being made to make St. Mary Mercy facilities tobacco and smoke free?**

A) As a healthcare leader, it is important that St. Mary Mercy Hospital model healthy behaviors for our patients and visitors, and provide a healthy, safe environment for all who work here and all who come here. Our Mission states that we “improve the health of the communities we serve,” and we believe that the research on the effects of smoking and second-hand smoke cannot be ignored.

**Q) Why is the decision to go tobacco and smoke free being made now?**

A) There is a growing trend among hospitals nationally and in Michigan to provide a smoke- and tobacco-free environment and it is our responsibility as a healthcare organization.

**Q) What is considered a tobacco product and what tobacco products are prohibited?**

A) Tobacco products include, but are not limited to: cigarettes, cigars, chewing tobacco and pipe smoking.

**Q) Where will tobacco be prohibited?**

A) Tobacco use will not be permitted in any indoor or outdoor locations of St. Mary Mercy Hospital property, including the Marian Professional Building and parking lots. In addition, smoking is not permitted in St. Mary Mercy owned or leased vehicles.

**Q) Is it clear where the tobacco and smoke-free zones start and stop?**

A) Boundaries are Five Mile Road to the north; Levan Road to the east; and the outer boundaries of the South and West parking lots. Signs will notify individuals as they enter the campus that smoking and use of tobacco products are not permitted.

**Q) Will smoking be allowed on sidewalks, streets?**

A) If the sidewalks or streets are within St. Mary Mercy property boundaries, smoking and use of tobacco products will not be permitted.

**Q) Will smoking be allowed on adjacent property?**

A) Smoking on adjacent property would involve trespassing and littering. St. Mary Mercy strives to be a good neighbor in the community, therefore smoking on adjacent property is not allowed.

**Q) Where can I smoke?**

A) You are permitted to smoke in any area outside of St. Mary Mercy grounds that is permissible by law. St. Mary Mercy does not encourage or endorse tobacco users to use surrounding neighborhoods to smoke or use other tobacco products by associates.

**Q) Can a person smoke in his/her car?**

A) Smoking is not permitted in cars parked in the parking lots of St. Mary Mercy Hospital or the Marian Professional Building. Parking off-campus on adjacent lots or in neighborhoods would not be acting as a good neighbor in the community, and should not occur.

**Q) What is my role as a physician?**

A) Please take every opportunity to remind your patients before they come to St. Mary Mercy Hospital that we are tobacco and smoke free. If a patient might require nicotine replacement during their stay, please discuss this with them ahead of time.

**Q) Our office is located on a St. Mary Mercy campus. What is our responsibility?**

A) We ask that you and your staff act as all other St. Mary Mercy associates and follow the policy to help protect our patients and visitors. If you see someone smoking, please remind them of our policy and ask that they comply. If you or your staff feels as if you are in a confrontational situation, walk away. If this involves a non-employee, call St. Mary Mercy Security. If the confrontation is with an associate or volunteer, notify their manager.

**Q) How does this policy support our commitment to patients and families who rely on smoking to relieve the stress of being in the hospital?**

A) We understand that nicotine is addictive. Please talk with your patients about Nicotine Replacement Therapy.

**Q) How will smokers manage cravings for nicotine?**

A) For those who do not want to quit, we suggest nicotine replacement therapy (gum, lozenges and patches) as well as new prescription drugs that can help curb the craving for nicotine.

**Q) How will the new policy be enforced?**

A) Educating others about our policy is the responsibility of all St. Mary Mercy associates, physicians, their staff, and volunteers. It is important to implement this policy in a courteous and respectful manner. The intent of this policy is to educate and create a healthier environment.

**Q) How will enforcement work, particularly for non-employees?**

A) It is the expectation of everyone working or volunteering on the St. Mary Mercy campus to inform all others that all St. Mary Mercy premises are tobacco and smoke-free environments. This should be done in a courteous and respectful manner.

**Q) What are the consequences for patients who are found smoking on the grounds?**

A) Patients will not be allowed to smoke or use tobacco products while they are admitted to St. Mary Mercy Hospital. Nicotine replacement therapy and on-site smoking cessation counselors will be available to patients. Patients who are defiant and insist on leaving the unit or building to smoke are considered leaving “against medical advice”. Nursing staff will notify their physician.

**Q) How is St. Mary Mercy informing people about the tobacco and smoke-free policy?**

A) St. Mary Mercy first announced this policy in September 2006 to all associates and physicians and continue communicating on a regular basis. In addition, the St. Mary Mercy's internal web site (SMMHweb) includes this information. Vendors, contractors and delivery companies are being notified about the policy. Patients who are scheduled to be admitted to St. Mary Mercy, or who are having outpatient surgery will receive information about the policy. This toolkit contains information for you to pass on to your patients as well.

**Q) Are there resources available for patients, visitors, volunteers and employees?**

A) Patients will have access to nicotine replacement therapy and a smoking cessation counselor if they express a desire to quit smoking. Other resources readily available to those who wish to quit smoking include: the Michigan Tobacco Quit Line Line (1.800.480.QUIT) and Michigan Department of Community Health (1.800.537.5666). In addition, St. Mary Mercy offers smoking cessation classes available by calling 734.655.8950.

