

Newswire

Special Edition Employee Newsletter Saint Barnabas Health Care System Southern Region

November 14, 2008



Saint Barnabas Health Care System Southern Facility Campuses Officially Go Tobacco and Smoke-Free November 20, 2008

All Saint Barnabas Health Care System southern region facility campuses will become tobacco and smoke-free this Thursday. The new policy broadens our "no smoking" zone from restricting smoking inside our buildings to restricting smoking and the use of all tobacco products anywhere outside our facilities, on our campuses. This new policy was created to ensure and sustain a healthy and safe environment for patients, visitors, employees, volunteers and physicians. The policy will prohibit smoking and tobacco use anywhere on properties owned by the Saint Barnabas Health Care System in the south including:

- All doorways and entrances
- Parking lots and garages
- In all vehicles on the property
- Grounds and sidewalks

Employees who smoke will not be required to quit smoking, but can be referred to the Saint Barnabas Institute for Prevention for assistance in quitting smoking and/or getting through the day. The Institute for Prevention has been and will continue to offer smoking cessation programs for all interested employees and members of the community.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Why are we banning smoking on all campuses?

A: Because it is the right thing for us to do. Here are some simple facts about smoking: Smoking is the leading cause of preventable death in the United States; Over 450,000 people die each year from smoking-related deaths; Secondhand smoke is a Class 1A carcinogen, and is in the same class as asbestos and contains at least 250 chemicals known to be toxic or cause cancer and heart disease.

Q: Will there still be designated smoking areas on campus where smoking will be permitted?

A: No. Providing a smoking location does not support our goal to create a safer, healthier environment.

Q: How will the smoking policy be enforced?

A: New procedures will be in place to monitor compliance with the new policy. Violations of this policy will be handled in the same way as any other policy violation. All employees who see visitors smoking on the campuses should be courteous in informing them of the smoke-free policy. Our intention is to educate everyone about the new policy. Security officers on all campuses are receiving special training in enforcing this policy with visitors and employees, and providing education materials regarding our smoking cessation resources.

Q: With the stress families face with the hospitalization of loved ones, won't we be offending our visitors in their time of need?

A: The majority of smokers realize that smoking has become socially unacceptable and even more so in a place focused on health and healing, such as a hospital campus. Our intention is to educate visitors about our smoking cessation resources, for their better health. Our security staff have been provided training and resources to gently confront visitors who are non-compliant with our smoke-free policy.

Q: What can I do if I see a co-worker smoking on campus?

A: Become a resource to them on the smoking cessation programs available to employees. Research shows that smokers are more likely to quit when those surrounding them are supportive in their efforts to quit smoking.

If you have any further questions about the new policy, please speak to your supervisor or a representative from your Human Resources Department.



CMC Employee Says Goodbye To Smoking

Community Medical Center Coder, Tina McGuire, talks about her personal journey to becoming smoke-free...

“ I’ve been a successful smoker for 24 years. I’ve been a successful quitter for 5 months. So what made this time any different from all those failed attempts in my past? This time it was a “team effort” - I didn’t fly solo.

Funny thing is I really had no intentions of quitting, back when the opportunity came to attend a tobacco treatment program. I basically wanted to learn how to cut down and just have those couple of cigarettes a day that were important to me—the ones with my morning coffee, my weekend merlot, and the stress reliever ones.

Having never been in a smoker’s support group before, I was a bit curious on just how this would work. So I joined the eight-week program held by Helene Long, tobacco treatment specialist with the Institute for Prevention, back in May. Helene stated the process for me through the changes.... the changing of my everyday habits. Simple changes such as walking in a different direction (away from the smoking gazebo) standing while smoking opposed to sitting and being comfortable, and the big one, to stop smoking in the car. After three weeks of changes, my quit date came. I know my co-workers were more excited than I was, and they were more ready than I ever could be. My 13-year-old son was excited, too. But all I thought was “great, another challenge for me, like I am really going to do this.”

So I got as prepared as I could. I put a nicotine patch on my arm, chewed my Nicorette gum, and wrapped myself in a blanket fighting the chills and shakes I was having those first few days. I found comfort in eating carrot and pretzel sticks, chewing on plastic straws, and blowing bubbles. Besides all that – it was the support system I had here at work and at home that keep me from slipping back, and I knew Helene was just a phone call away.

I received tons of overwhelming encouragement from my co-workers and the management team here. I even printed out some emails to keep in my purse, so when I would start feeling weak, I would read these words of support and encouragement over and over again. Five months later, I still find myself referring back to them from time to time.

One week after quitting, my son made me a card that I have hanging at my desk. Inside he wrote about how proud he is of me for really trying to quit this time. It’s a constant reminder and reinforcement of how much he loves me and wants me to be healthy. And that makes it all worth it.

I also continued attending the weekly support group with Helene after my quit date. I found that support so helpful and important.

As the days turned to weeks and the weeks turned to months, the cravings and desires to smoke have not completely gone away, but I know that I’m only one drag away from relapse. And how could I even begin to disappoint so many people? I had no idea how much power “pride” could have on me.

It is a real treat now to actually taste that Maine lobster drowned in butter; to smell the coconut from the shampoo that I never really smelled before; and the money I no longer need to spend on cigarettes.

When November 20th comes... I’ll be ready. Surprisingly I will be ready, rather than thinking about how I would be able to fit in driving off the parking lot during my break time to find a place to smoke.

I thank all those that touched my heart in more ways than I every thought possible.

”
It was so worth it.

Quit Programs Available for Employees

Did you know that trained Tobacco Treatment Specialists are holding Quit Programs at every southern facility location?

To help assist employees in either cutting back or kicking the nicotine habit, certified specialists from the Saint Barnabas Institute for Prevention are holding individual assessments and group support programs specifically for employees. If you have not done so already, call the Quit Line at (732) 886-4149 and schedule a personal, confidential assessment. Programs are available at a variety of times to accommodate different shifts.

Don’t delay..... Call today!

(732) 886-4149



Around The Southern Region . . .

Smoke-Free Commemorative Events for November 20th

At Community Medical Center...



- ◆ Clean Air Tree Planting Ceremony will be held at 3 pm with hot apple cider and refreshments.
- ◆ Information Table will be available from 11 am - 2 pm in the Cafeteria and Outpatient Lobby.
- ◆ Special “Cold Turkey” menu available in High Tide Cafe.
- ◆ Clean Air Lifesavers and candy will be available at the Patient Information Desk and with Security Officers.
- ◆ Nicotine Replacement (NRT) products will be available for purchase in the gift shop.

At Monmouth Medical Center...



- ◆ Information Table will be in the Main Lobby from 8 am - 5 pm manned by the Smoke-Free Committee with balloons, giveaways, and information about Quit programs for employees and the community.
- ◆ Clean Air Cake will be given out to employees in the cafeteria from 2 - 4 pm celebrating becoming a Smoke-Free campus with balloons, handouts and information about Quit programs.
- ◆ Anna Larotonda, certified tobacco specialist, will be available from 9am - 11am at the information table in the Main Lobby, and from 11 am - 1 pm in the Employee Health Department to meet individually with employees.

At the System Business Office...



- ◆ A “Give Thanks for Clean Air” breakfast will be available for employees at 7:30 am.
- ◆ Workgroup and Executive Committee, wearing special badges, will be readily available for information, questions, concerns and referrals to the Quit Program.
- ◆ “Great American Smoke Out” information table to exchange cigarettes for gum, mints, or lollipops. Clean Air Postcards and survival kits will be available.
- ◆ Host group walks at 10 am and 2 pm.

At Kensington Manor...

- ◆ Rounds will be conducted during all shifts to ensure awareness of the new smoke-free policy.
- ◆ Survival kits including Lifesavers, Institute for Prevention Cards, and lollipops will be distributed.
- ◆ Smoking Gazebo will be removed. Area will be rededicated in the Spring with picnic tables and flowers for staff to relax.

At Kimball Medical Center...



- ◆ Midnight Rounds will be made throughout the facility.
- ◆ Roving coffee cart with juice, Lifesavers, candy and a night shift raffle will begin at Midnight.
- ◆ 3-piece NRT survival kits will be available to staff. (Nicotine replacement gum or lozenges)
- ◆ Night shift will be provided breakfast vouchers for the cafeteria. The Café will open early 5:30 am.
- ◆ Information Table manned by Smoke-Free Committee will be outside the Cafeteria from 5:30 am - 2 pm with balloons, giveaways, raffle, handouts and information about Quit programs for employees and the community.
- ◆ An Ice Cream Social will be held on the Patio from 2 - 4 pm and again from 8 - 10 pm. Information Table with raffle, Lifesavers and Quit program information will be available.

At Saint Barnabas Behavioral Health Center...



- ◆ Information table manned by SBBHC Smoke-Free committee outside dining room from 7 am - 7 pm with balloons, giveaways, raffles and information about the Quit program.
- ◆ Connie Greene, certified tobacco specialist, will be available from 11 am - 1 pm at the information table to meet individually with employees. She will also provide NRT survival kits during this time.
- ◆ Special all-day menu featuring “Cold Turkey” sandwiches.
- ◆ Senior management will be conducting rounds throughout the day to answer questions.
- ◆ Smoke-Free Committee will be wearing Clean Air shirts and will be available to answer questions.
- ◆ Clean Air Lifesavers and candy will be made available at the front entrance reception desk and with security officers.
- ◆ Host group walks for employees every hour.

At Saint Barnabas Assisted Living at Lakewood...

- ◆ Information Table will available from 9 am - 4 pm with handouts, information, and snacks for residents.