

Smoke-Free Health Care

Summary This Policy Directive mandates that all NSW Health buildings, grounds, and vehicles are smoke-free and vape-free (smoke-free).

Document type Policy Directive

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Author branch Centre for Population Health

Branch contact (02) 9391 9000

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Applies to Ministry of Health, Public Health Units, Local Health Districts, Board Governed Statutory Health Corporations, Chief Executive Governed Statutory Health Corporations, Specialty Network Governed Statutory Health Corporations, Affiliated Health Organisations, NSW Health Pathology, Public Health System Support Division, Cancer Institute, Government Medical Officers, Community Health Centres, NSW Ambulance Service, Dental Schools and Clinics, Public Hospitals

Distributed to Ministry of Health, Public Health System, Divisions of General Practice, Government Medical Officers, NSW Ambulance Service, Environmental Health Officers of Local Councils

Audience All NSW Health staff

Smoke-Free Health Care

Policy Statement

NSW Health aims to reduce the risks to health associated with tobacco and e-cigarette use (smoking and vaping) by clients, staff, and visitors to NSW Health facilities; and limit the community's exposure to second-hand smoke and second-hand vape aerosol. The use of cigarettes, vaping products and other smoking products is banned in NSW Health buildings, grounds and vehicles.

Summary of Policy Requirements

All NSW Health buildings, grounds, and vehicles are smoke-free and vape-free (smoke-free). This means that smoking of tobacco products, using vaping products or non-tobacco smoking products is prohibited.

Smoke free by-laws

A Local Health District (District) or Specialty Health Network (Network) governed by statutory health corporations may implement a smoke-free by-law under the [Health Services Act 1997 \(NSW\)](#). These by-laws may designate public hospitals, health institutions and health services as smoke-free areas under section 6A of the [Smoke-free Environment Act 2000 \(NSW\)](#).

The by-law can also create designated outdoor smoking areas where smoking and vaping is permitted on hospital grounds. If a designated outdoor smoking area is declared, it must still comply with all requirements under the [Smoke-free Environment Act 2000 \(NSW\)](#). Districts and Networks are required to ensure compliance with smoke-free by-laws where they are in place. Clients, staff, and visitors who smoke or vape in smoke-free areas could be issued with a Penalty Infringement Notice (PIN). Districts need to ensure NSW Health Policy Directive [Prosecution Policy and Guidelines \(PD2014_021\)](#) and relevant guidelines are also followed.

All Districts and Networks are required to enforce the provisions of the [Smoke-free Environment Act 2000 \(NSW\)](#) in applicable settings, buildings, and grounds, regardless of whether a smoke-free by-law exists. This includes prohibiting persons smoking and vaping:

- in enclosed public places
- within 4 metres of the pedestrian access point to buildings
- at bus stops and cab ranks, where people queue or gather
- within 10 metres of children's play equipment
- in commercial outdoor dining areas.

Signage

Clients, staff, and visitors to NSW Health facilities should be informed about smoke-free requirements.

Districts and Networks are required to display signage across public hospitals, health institutions and health facility grounds where mandated under the [Smoke-free Environment Act 2000 \(NSW\)](#). The mandated signage must be displayed in such numbers and in positions of such prominence that they are likely to be seen by clients, visitors, and staff at the public entrance and within smoke and vape free areas. Requirements on wording and symbols of the mandated signage can be found in [section 6 of the Smoke-free Environment Regulation 2016 \(NSW\)](#). Districts and Networks can download or order mandated signage from the [NSW Health Smoke-free environment resources webpage](#).

Districts and Networks that have implemented smoke-free by-laws under section 6A (1) (k) of the Act, must display the prescribed signage. Sites that have designated smoking and vaping areas using by-laws must also comply with these signage requirements.

Districts and Networks can use or create additional resources to assist with public awareness and compliance under this Policy Directive. These resources are in addition to any mandated signage under the [Smoke-free Environment Act 2000 \(NSW\)](#). Where additional resources are displayed, the following can be considered:

- Placing resources in prominent areas within NSW Health grounds (such as main entrances to health facilities) or in areas where there may be a high likelihood of people smoking or vaping, such as observed through compliance activities.
- Accessories that might be conducive to smoking should be removed, such as ashtrays on hospital grounds.
- Use of health promotion materials that promote no smoking and vaping, along with cessation support services, such as Quitline and Aboriginal Quitline.

Cessation support and Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT)

Districts, Networks, and the St Vincent's Health Network will ask all clients about their smoking and vaping status. All clients who smoke or vape will be supported to manage their nicotine dependence and quit through the provision of brief cessation intervention which includes providing:

- advice on the benefits of quitting and the best ways to quit
- the option to manage withdrawal through the timely initiation of NRT, where clinically appropriate
- a supply of the same NRT product(s) used during hospital stay on discharge
- an offer of referral to NSW Quitline and/or to a cessation service provider.

A holistic and trauma informed approach should be used when offering cessation support, particularly for Aboriginal people and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Guidance to support NSW Health staff to deliver effective, evidence-based treatment and support management for nicotine dependence and cessation to clients is outlined in [Managing Nicotine Dependence: A Guide for NSW Health Staff](#).

All staff of Districts, Networks and the St Vincent's Health Network will be supported to manage their nicotine dependence and quit, through access to brief cessation interventions and at least 4 weeks' supply of free NRT per year from their organisation, as clinically appropriate. All staff will be offered a referral to NSW Quitline, or a cessation service provider.

Revision History

Version	Approved By	Amendment Notes
PD2025_009 March-2025	Deputy Secretary, Population and Public Health & Chief Health Officer	Revised policy – replaces PD2015_003 and IB2018_026. - Inclusion of content from IB2018_026 banning the use of e-cigarettes. - Removal of implementation summary in-line with new policy template. - Inclusion of information regarding signage. - Other changes to terminology.
IB2018_026 June-2018	Executive Director, Centre for Population Health	
PD2015_003 January-2015	Deputy Secretary, Public and Population Health	Replaces PD2005_375. Inclusion in revised PD of the ability of LHDs and speciality network governed statutory health corporations to make smoke-free bylaws. Other minor changes to terminology.
PD2005_375 January-2005	Deputy Secretary	Revised policy.