

Example Policy

SMOKING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

1. Policy

The Fellowship recognises that tobacco smoking remains the leading preventable cause of death and disease in Australia. The Fellowship is therefore committed to providing a smoke-free environment and will provide information, emotional support and encouragement in order to assist people living with a mental illness, their carers and staff to quit/reduce smoking.

2. Rationale

The Fellowship has a responsibility to staff, volunteers and service users to assist them to quit smoking. Smoking leads to a wide range of diseases, including many types of cancer, heart disease and stroke, chest and lung illnesses and stomach ulcers. It claims the lives of 15,000 Australians every year. Smoking can worsen the side effects of antipsychotic medication and complicate the treatment of mental illness. A higher than average number of people with mental illness, as well as those who work in the area, smoke cigarettes. Smokers suffer significant social disadvantage in addition to the negative impact on their physical health. The Fellowship recognises that many smokers would like to quit/reduce smoking and as such are committed to assisting in this process.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all Fellowship consumers, carers, services, staff and volunteers.

4. Procedures

Whilst acknowledging smokers' right to smoke, smoking will be discouraged for health reasons. The Fellowship has a variety of sites and offices and ideally all sites will be completely smoke free. However, in recognition of the needs of our community, the following procedures will be adopted -

- a. Staff will record the smoking status of all service users
- b. Staff will provide information, emotional support and encouragement to people who want to quit/reduce smoking. Information that will be provided includes Quit booklets, MHCC Smoking and Mental Health Fact Sheets and the Smoking Care Tool Kit

- c. Staff will refer people to support services such as GPs, Quit Line, pharmacies and local support groups. For more information please follow the links listed under “References and Resources”
- d. Staff will review the smoking status of all service users on a regular basis
- e. The Fellowship is committed to training staff to increase their skill level in assessing and supporting service users who want to quit
- f. The Fellowship recognises the importance of self-determination, individual choice and attitudinal change to improving health
- g. Smoking is restricted to outdoor designated areas which are clearly signposted. Where premises are shared with other organisations, then respect must be given for their assigned smoking and non-smoking areas in coordination with the Fellowship’s designated areas. Designated smoking areas are to be located away from the main building, not at the front entrances, or on the street outside the building. Designated areas are to be kept clean and tidy by smokers and will not be provided with umbrellas or cover of any kind, chairs or any other equipment that encourages long term use
- h. Staff will limit their smoking at work to their morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea breaks
- i. Staff are not permitted to smoke with, or around, service users at any time, including holidays and excursions
- j. Smoking is not permitted in Fellowship vehicles
- k. Staff making home visits have the right to request that the service user refrains from smoking during their visit. Staff can decline to work with people who choose to smoke during this time
- l. Staff are expected to act as role models in their behaviour. They are not permitted to supply cigarettes, ask others for cigarettes, or use cigarettes as a mode of engagement, coercion or control.

5. Statement on Consultation

The Fellowship embraces the principles of empowerment and self-determination through consultative practices that ensure that the voices of people living with a mental illness and their carers are heard and inform management, services and programs. In establishing and reviewing policies, the Fellowship consults with consumers, partners, staff and volunteers.

6. References & Resources

<http://www.cancer.org.au/preventing-cancer/smoking-and-tobacco/>
<http://www.cancercouncil.com.au/518/reduce-risks/smoking-reduce-risks/tackling-tobacco/tackling-tobacco-publications-and-resources/?pp=518>

www.mhcc.org.au (then type ‘Tobacco’ in search)
www.quitnow.info.au
<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/resources/owner/1008.asp>
www.sane.org
www.sfnsw.org.au