Smokefree Health Services

All health services have a smokefree policy in place, but is this enough? There are many health services where a strong smoking culture still exists. A supportive health service has a smokefree policy that is respected by staff as well as strategies to enhance staff wellbeing and smoking cessation. The culture of a health service is dependent upon the ‘norms’ accepted by staff and management, and the policies and programs in place. Below are three scenarios of health service practices and culture where it “could be better” is “getting there” and is “going well”. On the right are practical suggestions for how to promote a positive shift in your health service.

How are we going?

**COULD BE BETTER**

- Smoke-free policy is in place but there’s no coordinated strategy to support staff to quit
- Staff wellbeing is not a focus
- Many staff and clients smoke on the grounds and staff smoke in undesignated breaks
- Staff don’t discuss smoking with clients

What can we do?

- Invite staff to visit the Tackling the Triggers website for info and inspiration
- Invite a respected elder to remind staff about the benefits of smokefree spaces for staff and community
- Consult staff to find out what strategies they need to feel valued at work and to promote wellbeing
- Denormalise smoking using social marketing campaigns (e.g. Rewrite Your Story, Break the Chain)
- Provide smoking cessation training and encourage Quitline calls, GP visits, and talking to clients about smoking
- Promote a healthy workplace culture (e.g. cultural safety training, healthy snacks, walking groups, etc)
How are we going?

GETTING THERE

• There are some quit supports available for staff
• The service is beginning to provide wellbeing strategies for staff
• Most staff respect the smokefree policy but some still smoke on grounds or in uniform
• Some staff discuss smoking with clients

GOING WELL

• There are extensive quit supports available for staff
• Wellbeing strategies are in place for staff
• Staff respect the smokefree policy
• The number of staff who smoke has reduced in recent years
• Staff discuss smoking with clients

What can we do?

• Ensure all staff receive smoking cessation training and are able to access quit services
• Place the smokefree policy and staff wellbeing strategies on the weekly team meeting agenda and in induction procedures for new staff
• Promote joint decision making and high team morale in the service so all staff feel valued
• Positively reinforce staff who respect smokefree policy
• Showcase quit success stories
• Be flexible to respond to staff needs within changing community conditions (e.g. during sorry business)
• Encourage staff to discuss smoking with clients

• Review previous efforts to promote smokefree policy, staff wellbeing and smoking cessation strategies
• Assess the effectiveness of previous efforts and decide what can be done to sustain these efforts
• Identify and implement new strategies needed to meet staff needs in relation to smoking cessation and wellbeing
• Reinforce the importance of staff prioritising their own wellbeing so they can serve their community well
• Encourage staff to continue their efforts to support clients to quit smoking