Taking Action:
Mercy Regional Health Center Implements Smoke and Tobacco-Free Campuses

In an effort to provide healthy environments for the patients, guests, physicians and employees, Mercy Regional Health Center will become smoke and tobacco free on all of its campuses as of January 1, 2006.

As a healthcare facility, it is difficult to ignore evidence documenting the negative impact of tobacco use. For example, cigarette smoking is linked to heart disease, cancer, stroke and lung disease. Second hand smoke has also become an overwhelming concern for many people. “Despite our best efforts, we have fallen short of providing a safe and clean environment to all who enter our doors. In fact, second hand smoke has become one of our most common complaints. By going to a smoke and tobacco-free environment, we are taking action in addressing this very important issue,” stated Richard Allen, CEO.

We realize this transition will take some time for everyone to embrace our efforts to sustain a healthier environment for everyone. Mercy is not asking all employees to stop using tobacco, but we are requiring all employs refrain from using tobacco during work hours. Mercy is developing programs for employees who choose to quite using tobacco products all together as well as programs to help get them through a designated shift. “I have continued to make excuses to put off of kicking my 20-year, 1 pack a day habit but now knowing that I can not smoke on the campus is the incentive I need to finally deal with my addiction,” stated Bobbi Hamm, lead vascular technician. Our patients are our first priority and we are working closely with physicians as we develop coping strategies and nicotine cessation strategies for them.

Beginning today, signs have been posted at all campus entrances stating, “because we care about your health and the health of those around you, our buildings, parking lots, and grounds will be smoke and tobacco free starting January 1, 2006.”
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Implements Smoke and Tobacco-Free Campuses

In an effort to provide healthy environments for patients, guests, physicians and employees, Mercy Regional Health Center has become smoke and tobacco free on all of its campuses as of January 1, 2006. This means smoking or tobacco use of any kind will not be permitted on any property owned or leased by Mercy Regional Health Center. We realize this transition will take some time for everyone to embrace, however we remain vigilant in our efforts to sustain a healthier environment for everyone.

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Mercy is not asking all employees to stop using tobacco, but we are requiring all employees to refrain from using tobacco during work hours. Mercy has developed programs to help employees who choose to quit using tobacco products all together as well as programs to help get them through their work shift. “I have continued to make excuses to put off kicking my 20-year, 1 pack a day habit but now knowing that I can not smoke on the campus is the incentive I need to finally deal with my addiction,” stated Bobbi Hamm, lead vascular technician. Our patients are our first priority and we are working closely with physicians as we develop coping strategies and nicotine cessation strategies for them.

All cigarette receptacles have been removed from the grounds and signs have been posted at all campus entrances stating, “For Everyone’s Better Health! All of our grounds and buildings are smoke & tobacco free.”