

# Why have in-patient units become smoke free?



- Why is the ward now smoke free?
- What if I don't want to stop smoking?
- What will I do about withdrawal symptoms?
- What other support is there?

## Why is the ward now smoke free?

The decision for in-patient units to become smoke free was made based on direction from the Department of Health and Human Services and the guideline issued by the Chief Psychiatrist.

The Department of Health and Human Services requires that all hospitals are smoke free. All other residential inpatient areas of Bendigo Health are already smoke free.

Bendigo Health has a commitment to provide all patients, staff and visitors with an environment free from the risks associated with tobacco smoke.

Smoking can interfere with the effectiveness of medications, which means that hospital stays may be longer.

## What if I don't want to stop smoking?

We are not telling you to give up smoking permanently.

Staff can assist you to develop a plan to manage being unable to smoke while in hospital. This may be through the use of Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) or by using other strategies such as relaxation and diversion techniques.

Quitting is one of the best things you can do for your health, but if you are not ready to quit, you are able to smoke when you leave the hospital grounds once you are well enough to have leave approved by your Psychiatrist.

If you have escorted leave, please be aware that Bendigo Health policy states that staff should not be exposed to second hand smoke. Therefore, if you are taking escorted leave with staff, you will be asked to not smoke in close proximity to staff escorting you.

## What will I do about withdrawal symptoms?

We understand that it is very hard to be a smoker who is struggling with a mental illness and not be able to smoke. To assist you to manage while you are unable to smoke, our doctors are able to prescribe you free NRT while you are an in-patient.

You can choose not to use NRT if you wish, however it is well known that it can help with managing withdrawal symptoms.

There are several NRT options available. Feel free to discuss your preferences for NRT with your treating team.

## What other support is there?

Nursing staff can provide you with information on NRT and strategies to manage periods when you are not able to smoke.

Psychiatric Services has employed a Tobacco Treatment Specialist Nurse (TTSN) to provide advice for patients when they are not able to smoke, or to assist when they want to either cut down or quit. Please ask for a TTSN leaflet if you would like more information.

You can also be referred to Quit Victoria or your local Community Health Service for further support if you would like it.

### Other resources:



**My QuitBuddy** is a personalised app to help you on your journey to become smoke free.

**Quit for you - Quit for two** is an app that provides support and encouragement to give up smoking if you are pregnant or planning to be.

My QuitBuddy  
Apple iTunes

My QuitBuddy  
Google Play

Quit for you - Quit for two  
Apple iTunes

Quit for you - Quit for two  
Google Play

**Quit Victoria's Quitline 13 78 48**

**Online support:** [Quit.org.au](http://Quit.org.au)

#### **Community health services offering support:**

Bendigo	5435 4300
Echuca	5485 5801
Castlemaine	5479 1000
Maryborough	5461 0400
Swan Hill	5032 9755

## Patient notes