



NEWS RELEASE

from Halton Healthcare Services

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Halton Healthcare Announces Plans to Ban Smoking

On July 1, 2009 Halton Healthcare Services will implement a total smoking ban at its three community hospitals – Oakville-Trafalgar Memorial Hospital, Milton District Hospital and Georgetown Hospital.

“As a healthcare organization, it is our responsibility to provide a healthy environment for patient treatment and recovery, and protect everyone from the harmful effects of second hand smoke,” explains John Oliver, HHS President and CEO. “Going smoke free is an important preventive measure which will help promote health and wellness, and send an important message to all levels of our organization and our communities about the harmful effects of tobacco.”

“Smoking and exposure to second and third hand smoke can cause many diseases and lead to premature death,” explains Dr. Laurence Chau, HHS Respiriologist. “It can increase your risk for lung cancer, heart disease and contribute to serious respiratory problems in children and adults, such as acute and chronic bronchitis, emphysema, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) and pneumonia. I believe, this smoking ban will be key in encouraging many positive healthy lifestyle changes.”

An HHS Task Force is overseeing the work required to move the organization toward a smoke free environment similar to that which has been achieved by its neighbouring hospitals. This includes a roll out of a comprehensive communication campaign, the identification of smoking cessation programs/opportunities for HHS staff and patients, the development of a new smoking policy, a review of the medical management of patients who smoke as well as the development of an enforcement plan.

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HHS Smoking Ban

Mr. Oliver admits that transitioning into a completely smoke free facility will have its challenges. However, he strongly believes that, "as a healthcare provider we should do everything in our power to set a healthy example and provide a smoke free environment for our patients and staff."

HHS plans to launch the countdown to a smoke free environment on May 31, 2009 – World No Tobacco Day - with a smoking ban target date of July 1, 2009.

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