

# Smoke Free and Vaping Policy

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<b>Date Ratified</b>	<b>Brief summary of significant changes/ amendments</b>	<b>Author/ contributor</b>
18 August 2025	Updated websites and documentation to reflect current information	Liz Blackburn & Olivia Cooper
19 Aug 2021 (approved by Exec Lead)	Title amended from 'Smoke Free Policy' to 'Smoke Free and Vaping Policy'	Hilary Durrant
3 January 2024	Updated staff able to access off site help. Reword of staff not permitted to smoke during working hours. Nicotine Spray now offered alongside patches.	Fran Aldrich (TDA)
02/07/25	Advice on PAT testing charging cables, Smoking cessation advice removed	Liz Blackburn
12/08/2025	Change author to LB	Liz Blackburn

**Policy Summary / Key Information**

This document is in place to guide Queen Victoria Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (QVH) staff and managers to support them with making the hospital a Smoke Free establishment.

## Contents

1. Introduction .....	4
2. Scope.....	4
3. Duties.....	4
4. Smoke Free Environment.....	6
5. Electronic Cigarettes/Vaping .....	7
6. Training and Awareness.....	7
7. Equality .....	8
8. Review .....	8
9. Discipline.....	8
10. Monitoring Compliance with this Policy .....	9
11. References .....	9
12. Associated Documentation .....	10

## 1. Introduction

The Smoke-free (Premises and Enforcement) Regulations 2006 state that all enclosed premises and company vehicles are to be smoke free without exception. This applies to Queen Victoria NHS Foundation Trust (The Trust). The Trust has a statutory duty to display signage to inform the public and to enforce these regulations.

Tobacco smoke pollution is an unwanted and unnecessary hazard to public health. Smoking kills 78,000 people each year in the UK. Thousands more suffer harm from diseases such as asthma, angina, nausea, headaches and other respiratory illnesses.

Allowing patients and staff to smoke undermines the message that smoking and tobacco smoke pollution are dangerous.

The NHS, as the principal health treatment and promotion organisation, should take the lead in promoting the no-smoking message. As the largest employer in the country, the NHS has a duty to protect the health and wellbeing of staff, as well as patients, from the health hazards of smoking and to demonstrate exemplary conduct to other employers.

It also has a duty to promote the health benefits of not smoking.

### **Definitions:**

Smoke Free – It is prohibited to smoke on any trust property, including outside areas

Vape - to inhale nicotine vapour (from an electronic cigarette)

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees of the Trust in all locations including the Non-Executive Directors, temporary employees, locums and contracted staff. It is also applicable to patients and visitors to the trust.

## 3. Duties

Section 2(2) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 places a duty on employers to:

*“...provide and maintain a safe working environment which is, so far as is reasonably practical, safe, without risks to health and adequate as regards facilities and arrangements for their welfare at work.”*

To ensure compliance with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, certain regulations must be followed - these include the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 which, under General Principles of Prevention, include:

- Avoiding risks
- Combating risks at source
- Replacing the dangerous by the non-dangerous or the less dangerous
- Giving collective protective measures priority over individual protective measures

### 3.1 Duties within the Organisation

The Trust Chief Executive must ensure that mechanisms are in place to:

- Ensure that staff patients, volunteers, visitors and contractors are made aware of the policy
- Ensure that this policy is adhered to by staff, and that resources are available to ensure effective implementation
- Comply fully with the policy and provide a suitable role model for staff and patients

Trust Directors must

- Ensure that managers are aware of the policy and are supported in enforcing the policy with staff
- Comply fully with the policy and provide a suitable role model for staff and patients

Line Managers must

- Ensure that all staff reporting to them adhere to this policy
- Ensure that any staff wishing to quit smoking will be allowed to access recognised on or off-site stop smoking sessions during work time. Adequate cover must be provided to allow staff time off to seek help quitting
- Previously agree and record as authorised absence any stop smoking sessions held on or off site attended by an employee
- Ensure that staff are fully supported in reminding other people of the no smoking policy
- Comply fully with the policy and provide a suitable role model for staff and patients

Staff must

- Comply fully with this policy and provide a suitable role model for other staff, patients and visitors by complying with the policy

#### 4. Smoke Free Environment

- 4.1 Smoking is not permitted inside the buildings or the grounds of the Trust. Staff and patients/visitors are not permitted to smoke in their vehicles whilst parked on site. When staff smoke off site, uniforms or scrubs must be completely covered by a coat so they cannot be identified as Trust staff and consideration given to the lasting effects of smoke fumes when caring for patients. Scrubs are easily identifiable as uniform and should not be worn outside Trust grounds in line with the Uniform and Dress Code Policy.
- 4.2 As a provider of health services this Trust will act responsibly in protecting people from passive smoking on its own premises and the Trust expects its staff to act as “ambassadors” for the Trust with regard to the implementation of this policy.
- 4.3 Staff should ascertain the smoking status of patients when they register for treatment so that any issues regarding smoking can be addressed as early as possible.
- 4.4 All patients are to be provided with information on smoking either at pre-assessment appointments or admission to the ward, alerting them to its detrimental effects on wound healing, post anaesthetic recovery, and length of stay. They will be provided with advice on stopping smoking before being admitted and with information on how to access a smoking cessation clinic local to their home.
- 4.5 Staff making home visits must be provided with a smoke free environment to work in. Staff entering a patient environment shall request the patient does not smoke while the visit is taking place.

As home visits are planned events, the Healthcare practitioner should contact the patient informing them of the appointment time and request that the patient and their family refrains from smoking one hour before the visit. If the patient refuses they will not be offered treatment in their home. Staff have the right to refuse to enter a home that is not smoke-free. (*Protecting community staff from exposure to second hand smoke -RCN best practice guide 2006*)

- 4.6 Where appropriate patients may be prescribed nicotine replacement therapy or advised to purchase on a case by case basis.

4.7 No tobacco products will be sold on Trust premises.

## 5. Electronic Cigarettes/Vaping

5.1 Whilst Public Health England reviews the evidence regarding e cigarettes and vaping (Appendix B). Queen Victoria will allow Electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) and/or vaping in designated outside areas but not inside buildings. These areas are located behind Theatre, in the rear car park and near the Learning & Development centre. These areas are Vape Only and **STRICTLY NO SMOKING**.

5.2 Safety advice should be given to patients receiving therapies at home, e.g. home oxygen therapy. The British Oxygen Company (BOC) advocate that e-cigarettes should not be used whilst a patient is undergoing oxygen therapy and that batteries of e-cigarettes should not be charged in the vicinity of a patient undergoing oxygen therapy or the oxygen source itself. They recommend that if you are using electronic cigarettes you should follow the same safety principles adopted when smoking burning cigarettes.

5.3 Patients that are admitted in to the Trust must have their charging leads must have Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) tested, this is available via the Estates team.

## 6. Training and Awareness

6.1 To ensure that everyone entering Trust sites understands that smoking is not allowed, **No Smoking** signs will be clearly displayed throughout the Trust premises and grounds. All patient facing registered clinical and medical staff are required to complete ELearning Alcohol and Smoking Brief Interventions available on ESR.

6.2 Job descriptions will contain the following clause:

*Queen Victoria Hospital NHS Foundation Trust is a smoke-free Trust covering Trust premises, grounds and any Trust owned vehicle. Staff are not permitted to smoke during their working hours and will be protected from passive smoking both in the Trust and whilst making home visits.*

6.3 Details of this policy and support available for smokers should be routinely covered in an employee's local induction. Information about the Trust's smoking status will be available on Qnet, in all recruitment literature and job offers, and in department safety policies and Trust website.

6.4 Contracts with external organisations must contain the following clause:

*Queen Victoria Hospital NHS Foundation Trust is a smoke free Trust. Smoking is not permitted on any Trust premises or grounds. All contractors must fully comply with this policy.*

6.5 Service Level Agreements with other organisations must contain the following clause:

*Queen Victoria Hospital NHS Foundation Trust is a smoke free Trust. Smoking is not permitted on any Trust premises or grounds. All employees, patients, volunteers, visitors and contractors must fully comply with this policy.*

6.6 Patients will be informed of the smoke free status of the Trust within their appointment letter. Patients will have the opportunity to be referred to a smoking cessation service within their locality when pre-assessed. In-patients will be encouraged to consider quitting prior to admission. Patients will be asked to refrain from smoking or vaping during home visits.

## **7. Equality**

This policy and protocol has been equality due regard assessed in accordance with the Trust's Equality Due Regard Assessment Guidance. Completed assessments are available upon request from [qvh.edra@nhs.net](mailto:qvh.edra@nhs.net).

## **8. Review**

This policy will be reviewed in three years' time. Earlier review may be required in response to exceptional circumstances, organisational change or relevant changes in legislation or guidance.

## **9. Discipline**

9.1 Staff breaching this policy will, in the first instance, be dealt with in a supportive manner by their manager. They will be given information on the local Stop Smoking Service. Further breaches may be dealt with using the Trust's formal disciplinary procedures.

9.2 No member of staff will be disciplined for failing to inform patients or visitors of the policy. Although all staff are encouraged to make people aware of the policy, they should not put themselves at risk of physical or verbal abuse.

9.3 Staff must be supported if they report any breaches to their line manager, who will be responsible for dealing with the breach. Staff can confidentially report colleagues via **smokersalert** [qvh.smokersalert@nhs.net](mailto:qvh.smokersalert@nhs.net) email if they are not confident to address personally at the time.

9.4 Patients and visitors - It is recommended that when staff choose to approach a patient or visitor to inform them of the trust policy, this approach is made only once. The information provided should be limited to and along the lines of: "Can I make you aware that this is a smoke free trust within both the hospital and grounds."

9.5 A zero tolerance approach will be applied to any patients or visitors who become abusive when reminded of the policy and action will be taken to protect staff.

9.6 Staff doing home visits are within their rights to refuse to enter a home while patients are smoking.

## **10. Monitoring Compliance with this Policy**

Datix incident reporting on poor compliance will be provided to the Health and Safety Committee.

## **11. References**

### a. Legislation

Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999

[Smoking at work: the law - GOV.UK](#)

### b. Guidance from Other Organisations

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-matters-smoking-and-quitting-in-england/smoking-and-quitting-in-england>

[Smoking - GOV.UK](#)

*Choosing Health making healthier choices* HMSO February 2005

RCN – Protecting community staff from exposure to second hand smoke (RCN best practice guide 2006)

<https://www.nhs.uk/common-health-questions/lifestyle/what-are-the-health-risks-of-smoking/#:~:text=Every%20year%20around%2078%2C000%20people,term%20damage%20to%20your%20health>

[The British Oxygen Company – Dangers of smoking whilst using oxygen therapy](#)  
Collins Dictionary

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/lifestyle-and-wellbeing/smoking-and-tobacco>

[Overview | Stop smoking interventions and services | Guidance | NICE](#)

Smokefree (Premises and Enforcement) Regulations 2006

DH Estates & Facilities Alert EFA 2014 002 16 June 2014 E-cigarettes batteries and chargers

## **12. Associated Documentation**

### **Appendix A**

#### **Resources**

##### National Support

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/quit-smoking/nhs-stop-smoking-services-help-you-quit/>

##### Local Support

[Local stop smoking services | Smokefree](#)

### **Appendix B**

#### **Public Health England**

[Vaping in England: 2020 evidence update summary - GOV.UK](#)