



# News Release

January 21, 2009

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## Central Health goes smoke-free

Effective today, January 21, 2009, Central Health is going smoke free at all facilities and offices throughout the region. This means that patients, clients, residents, visitors and staff will no longer be permitted to smoke indoors or on any exterior grounds and parking lots.

"We are pleased to be able to support a *Smoke Free Properties* policy at Central Health starting today," said Karen McGrath, CEO of Central Health. "This policy will help us achieve our vision of healthy people living in healthy communities."

The biggest change with the implementation of the new policy is that as of today, Central Health will be smoke free to the property line at all facilities and buildings, including parking lots and vehicles on the premises.

"We recognize that this will be a culture change for some people, but it is a change we feel we should make," said Gail Huang, Director of Employee Wellness, Health and Safety. "We are asking for the public's co-operation with the policy and to be smoke free on our properties. "We hope this will provide an incentive for employees and clients who smoke to make a move to a healthier lifestyle as a non-smoker."

"Central Health staff treat people who are affected by illnesses caused by tobacco use, so it is beneficial that the organization put policies in place to support a healthy lifestyle, including the restriction of not smoking on its properties," said Valerie Pritchett, Director of Cardio-Pulmonary Services and Chair of the Clean Air Committee. "We also want to remind people that not only are we smoke free on our properties, clients who receive care in their homes are asked to refrain from smoking an hour before Central Health staff arrive and while they are there providing care to you."

Central Health has been promoting the policy through posters, brochures and advertising in an effort to prepare both staff and the public for the smoke free initiative.

People looking for more information on quitting smoking can call the Smoker's Helpline at 1-800-363-5864.

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