

Tobacco-Free UK:

A Healthy Place to Live, Work and Learn

GOING TOBACCO-FREE

LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY

... currently celebrating 4 years of tobacco-free!

PLANNING

- ✓ **Did the initiative start at the top with the President, or did it begin with students and advocacy groups from the bottom up? Who championed the cause on the campus?**

UK administration was supportive and helped facilitate the process of implementing the tobacco-free policy. The President was integral in garnering campus support so it was more of a top-down approach. In 2008, the UK Medical campus went tobacco-free, and the main campus followed in 2009. There was a 9-10 month planning period before each of the policy implementation periods. The campus convened a Task Force which had representatives representing 35 different sectors from across campus: administration, student affairs, athletics, legal, healthcare, tobacco treatment specialists, wellness, student groups (graduate and undergraduate), housing, etc. This was very helpful in moving forward with the policy. The Task Force still meets regularly. In addition, Dr. Ellen Hahn and Anthany Beatty (VP Assistant Public Safety) co-chaired the committee. It was beneficial to have a tenured faculty (with expertise in health policy and tobacco control) and someone in administration leading the charge. It did help that the city/county where UK is located was smoke-free inside all workplaces.
- ✓ **How can we convince administrators on our campus to implement a tobacco-free policy?**

Support the cause with evidence-based data (local tobacco use data, economic impact, healthcare costs, impact of outdoor tobacco smoke exposure) to drive home your points. We framed the message as one of health for the entire campus community, i.e. *A healthy place to live, work and learn.*
- ✓ **Over what period of time was the new policy rolled out?**

There was a 9-10 month planning period for the main campus. Our medical campus went tobacco-free one year prior to the main campus. We recommend incorporating a 1 year planning phase to build demand and capacity.
- ✓ **What were cost factors in implementing the new policy?**

The Task Force budgeted \$150,000 for the first year. This included cost of NRT, but to date we have only spent a total of about \$20,000 over three years (this is due to the fact that we negotiated a very low per coupon cost—about \$15 per two weeks per coupon). In the first year, we only spent about \$100,000. Much of the cost the first year related to signage, removing old trash receptacles which had ashtrays, communications/PR. We now staff part-time Ambassadors 60 hours/week to help with compliance efforts.

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✓ **How did you engage the neighbors whose property edged the campus?**

We had a Good Neighbor committee. We had several forums to invite people in (although they did not come). UK made a commitment to provide signs for organizations that wanted to go tobacco-free along with UK (i.e. UK partner). We had 13 organizations that went along with us. We also bought a “goat” that helps to clean up cigarette butts and made a priority to the neighborhood that we would clean up the butts on adjoining streets/sidewalks.

✓ **How did you let people know what areas were covered by the tobacco-free policy?**

It is very important to have a comprehensive campus map. The map should show all areas covered by the policy. You will need to work with your university architect. We have also found it helpful to show where NRT is available on our campus.

✓ **What about streets/sidewalks that are not university-owned (i.e., state and/or city)?**

We strongly suggest you try and get all streets and sidewalks covered under the policy, regardless of who owns. You can provide rationale that the university cleans the sidewalks when it snows and when leaves are covering them, so the policy should cover those locations. When you have areas not covered by the policy in the middle of campus, it does make compliance more difficult. If you cannot gain support from the city/state, we encourage you to share the message of respecting pedestrians.

✓ **Did the Task Force complete a campus petition or survey?**

Yes, prior to implementing the tobacco-free campus policy, a survey was conducted. Results indicated a majority of individuals on campus supported the policy: 64 percent of UK's students, 77 percent of UK's faculty and 63 percent of UK's staff felt positive to very positive about the campus becoming tobacco-free. We do recommend completing this at the beginning of the planning phase to show there is support for such a policy.

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IMPLEMENTING

✓ **What model can we use to help implement the tobacco-free policy?**

We used the 3Ts of Tobacco-free Policy Implementation. *Tell* about the policy via good signage and integrated, consistent communication. *Treat* tobacco users by providing free NRT and a menu of counseling/behavioral support. *Train* staff and volunteers. More information on this model can be found <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22289402>

✓ **What kind of signage should we use on our campus?**

We found it is important to brand your message. Go back to the goal of your policy and make sure you have consistent messaging. Get the message out in a variety of ways, including permanent signs throughout campus grounds, parking structures, heat transfers on sidewalks, posters, napkin holders, etc.

✓ **How do we get the message of the tobacco-free policy out?**

Small index cards are a cheap way to remind individuals of the policy. It also enables you to share tobacco treatment resources, direct individuals to the website, and report line. Social media is also an excellent way to share the tobacco-free policy. Student organizations really seem interested in this communication method.

✓ **How can we involve students?**

There are many ways to involve students and they should be involved in all phases, including planning, implementing, and compliance efforts. Some examples include: building tobacco-free into the academic curriculum, class projects, service projects, volunteer Ambassadors, etc. It is also important to involve student organizations, including student government.

✓ **What is the benefit of collaborating with other organizations on campus?**

By collaborating with other campus organizations, you are able to get the message of the tobacco-free policy out in a variety of ways and reach all sectors of the campus. Reinforce your brand. Examples include: health and wellness programming for students, faculty, and staff; orientations; student advising; resident advisor trainings; staff appreciation day; any student organization event; collaborate with those interested in green/sustainability movement.

✓ **How did you inform International students about this policy?**

We aimed to inform everyone on campus initially with group meetings, presentations, and other awareness efforts. With such growth and turnover in our International programs, we are learning we have a constant need to remind this segment of our campus about the tobacco-free policy. We have included information in their orientation materials, syllabi, and have consistent communications with the Dean and staff about reminders and getting tobacco treatment resources to this population. We also have representatives on the Tobacco-free Task Force.

✓ **How do you deal with sports arenas used for public concert, events, etc.?**

Make sure you have proper signage everywhere. Also, you need to make sure you work with campus events, athletics, any outside organizations involved to put reminders of the policy in programs, on tickets, etc. Again, consistent messaging is key. We also do training with event personnel and security.

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✓ **What were the critical challenges you have had to address?**

There was very little push back from the campus when the policy was implemented. Much of this had to do with the long planning phase and purposeful efforts to promote the policy. One main challenge is the fact that city and state-owned streets surround and run through our campus so we are not able to enforce the policy on these areas. We do ask that tobacco users *respect* pedestrians, but that is all we can do.

COMPLIANCE

✓ **What experiences has your campus had with enforcement of the tobacco-free policy?**

The vast majority of individuals on campus support the policy. We still have our hot spots, but we are continually striving to improve compliance. We believe compliance is everyone's business and we train individuals on campus to approach violators of the tobacco-free policy. In spring of 2011, we implemented a *Tobacco-free Take Action!* Ambassador program to help promote compliance efforts across campus. We currently have part-time trained Ambassadors who are out on campus daily. They document observed violators, approach violators, and report violators if appropriate. They also are helping us train others on proper use of scripting when approaching violators. They have been extremely helpful in improving our enforcement efforts. More information can be found on www.uky.edu/TobaccoFree We also recommend having an enforcement plan going into policy implementation. Create an environment of compliance. Integrate into corrective procedures you already have on your campus.

✓ **How do you deal with enforcement on city and state owned streets/sidewalks?**

This has been one of our challenges since we do have city and state owned streets/sidewalks bordering and running through our campus. To be consistent with the goals of our policy, we don't tell individuals where *they can go* to use tobacco products. We frame it as, "XX property ends on XX St. or XX sidewalks." We do ask that tobacco users *respect* pedestrians, but that is all we can do. We have tried passing out informational cards in high traffic areas as well.

✓ **Have you had reports of violations and how have you handled reports of violations?**

Yes, we have had reports of violations since the policy was implemented. We have received emails from students, faculty and staff and keep a log of all complaints. In addition, as mentioned above, we now have Ambassadors who are out on campus in an effort to improve compliance. They do report violators if they are able to identify them. We also have a web-based and email-based report line so anyone on campus can anonymously (web-based)/confidentially (email-based) report violators of the policy. When individuals are reported, we submit the information to the appropriate person: Dean of Students, Employee Supervisor, Human Resources, etc. You need a point person to handle all of the communication and follow up.

✓ **Has any disciplinary action been taken and was it grieved in any way?**

We have had several students who were repeat violators and reported to the Dean of Students. They are subject to the Student Code of Conduct and may be referred to a tobacco education class, receive a fine, and/or have a hold placed on their registration. It is ultimately up to the Dean of Students on a case-by-case basis. The protocol is similar with employees as we follow up with their supervisor/Human Resources. We believe there was one staff member who went through the 7-step corrective action procedure and was a repeat violator. That person was terminated from the university for not following the policy. It is important to note that our campus is committed to providing tobacco treatment resources and making them readily accessible and affordable. We have seen a four-fold increase in

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attempts to quit among employees, students, and sponsored dependents since the policy went into effect in November 2009.

✓ **How do we promote compliance of the policy once implemented?**

We have learned that compliance is an ongoing process. Our main goal is for people on campus to realize that compliance is everyone's business. We train individuals to use scripting when approaching violators of the policy. This firm, polite and compassionate approach has been very effective. We also have our report line for individuals to report violators of the policy. In addition, it is imperative to be in constant communication with building supervisors, deans, Human Resources, Student Administration. It is a team effort!

✓ **What is the *Tobacco-free Take Action!* Ambassador program?**

The premise behind the Ambassador program was to promote visibility and good will. Ambassadors provide education about the policy and tobacco treatment resources available on campus. In addition, they help with web updates, social media campaigns, data collection, reporting violators, and monitoring of the report line. For more information, you can read about a pilot of our program here: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23936747>

TOBACCO TREATMENT

✓ **Does the campus provide smoking cessations programs for faculty, staff, and students?**

Yes, UK offers an abundance of resources to help people quit and/or to manage their nicotine cravings while on campus. We made this a priority and have seen a 4-fold increase in use of tobacco treatment since policy implementation. See the *Quit Here* tab on our website www.uky.edu/TobaccoFree

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GENERAL QUESTIONS

✓ **Are you tobacco-free or smoke-free?**

Our policy is tobacco-free, and includes all tobacco products. More information can be found on our website www.uky.edu/TobaccoFree. This is consistent with the goal of our policy...a healthy place to live, work, and learn. This is also the recommended gold standard by the American College Health Association.

✓ **Where is smoking allowed on campus (i.e., public sidewalks surrounding campus, parking lots, private cars, smoking huts, etc.)?**

The use of all tobacco products is prohibited in all owned, operated, leased, occupied, or controlled University buildings and structures, grounds, parking structures, enclosed bridges and walkways, sidewalks, streets, parking lots, and vehicles, as well as personal vehicles in these areas. There are city and state-owned streets which surround and run through our campus so we are not able to enforce the policy on these areas. We do ask that tobacco users respect pedestrians, but that is all we can do.

✓ **Did implementing the tobacco-free policy have any impact on your enrollment?**

UK enrollment continues to increase so the tobacco-free policy did not appear to have an impact on enrollment rates. In fact, we have had individuals report they came to UK because of the policy.

✓ **Did you experience issues with your employee unions?**

No, but Kentucky has few unions.

✓ **What type of negative feedback did you receive and how did you address?**

Usually every time we send a reminder of the tobacco-free policy, we get 20-30 email responses with only a few that provide negative feedback. Because we implemented the policy slowly, we were able to get a lot of buy-in prior to implementation. We made sure the focus was on helping people, making sure tobacco treatment and NRT resources were available to be comfortable. It is important to listen to all concerns and not discount them.

✓ **Describe any lessons learned.**

The planning phase is extremely important. It is necessary to have all sectors of campus represented on a task force/committee. Evaluation should be conducted both pre- and post-policy. This will help provide support and/or address concerns as well as provide continual evidence to administration. Patience is a necessity...policy change takes time!

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