

JOHNS HOPKINS BLOOMBERG SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH
TOBACCO-FREE CAMPUS INITIATIVE

Background

Tobacco is the leading cause of preventable deaths, responsible for about one in five deaths annually in the US,¹ and responsible for more deaths annually than HIV, illegal drug use, alcohol use, motor vehicle injuries, suicides and murders combined.² The 2014 US Surgeon General's Report on Smoking and Health highlights that between the period 1964-2014, smoking and exposure to secondhand smoke were responsible for more than 20 million premature deaths, and that conclusive evidence on the adverse impacts of tobacco use on both smokers and non-smokers continues to expand.³ It is estimated that six million youth alive today will eventually die prematurely from smoking.² Almost all (99%) adults who smoke everyday started smoking when they were 26 or younger.⁴ This makes university campuses a strategic target for tobacco use prevention and cessation efforts.

In response to the robust body of evidence on the health and economic costs of tobacco products, the US Department of Health and Human Services (USDHHS) established the Tobacco-Free College Campus Initiative (TFCCI) with the aim of promoting and supporting the adoption and implementation of tobacco-free policies at universities, colleges and other institutions of higher learning. Tobacco-free policies help to denormalize tobacco use, reduce initiation of tobacco products, and encourage users to quit, and thus can reduce secondhand smoke, smoking prevalence and heart disease mortality.⁵

Whereas the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health (JHSPH) prohibits smoking in all facilities owned, leased or operated by the School,^{*} it has become imperative to join the growing number of institutions that are advocating for and implementing 100% tobacco-free initiatives. Deterring the use of tobacco in all forms, and not cigarettes alone, is crucial to protect the health of the students and workforce of the JHSPH community. Furthermore, discouraging the use of tobacco on campus does not infringe on anyone's choice to use tobacco. In addition, 100% tobacco-free initiatives ensure that institutions are not unintentionally encouraging or reinforcing tobacco addiction among students and staff.

Currently, universities such as Emory University, the University of California System, Tulane University (6 campuses), the University of Illinois at Chicago, the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry, the University of Wisconsin, the University of Oklahoma as well as seven institutions of higher learning in the State of Maryland are among 811 U.S. colleges and universities that have adopted 100% tobacco-free initiatives.⁶ Known for its leadership in many ground-breaking research and public health efforts that have improved and saved millions of lives globally, the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health should champion and fully adopt a tobacco-free campus initiative that fully protects its students, faculty, staff and visitors from the harms of tobacco.

* : <http://hrnt.jhu.edu/pol-man/appendices/sectionI.cfm>

Initiative recommendation

WHAT IS THE INITIATIVE TO BE IMPLEMENTED?

Only comprehensive tobacco-free campus policies that prohibit all forms of tobacco in both indoor and outdoor spaces can fully protect students, faculty and staff of the JHSPH community. To assist in implementing tobacco-free initiatives, the American College Health Association (ACHA)⁷ recommends the following definitions:

Tobacco is defined as all tobacco-derived or containing products, including, but not limited to, cigarettes (clove, bidis, kreteks), cigars and cigarillos, hookah-smoked products, and oral tobacco (spit and spitless, smokeless, chew, snuff). For purpose of this initiative, including the prohibitions below, “tobacco” also refers to electronic cigarettes.

Areas to be covered: Smoking is prohibited on all school-owned or leased properties, and in campus-owned, leased or rented vehicles. As part of this initiative, all tobacco use would be prohibited in these locations; in addition, tobacco use would be discouraged on all outdoor campus grounds.

Prohibition of Direct and Indirect Tobacco Advertisement, Promotion and Sponsorship:

The USDHHS Tobacco-Free College Campus Initiative also states that the sale of tobacco products and tobacco-related merchandise (including logo-containing items) should be prohibited on all School property and at School-sponsored events, regardless of the operating vendor.

The distribution or sampling of tobacco and associated products should be prohibited on all School owned or leased property and at School-sponsored events, regardless of the venue.

Tobacco industry and related company sponsorship of athletic events and athletes should be prohibited.

The School should not permit tobacco companies on campus to conduct student recruitment or employment activities.

The School should provide and/or promote cessation services/resources for all members of the JHSPH community.

HOW IS THE INITIATIVE TO BE IMPLEMENTED?

The “four T’s” of adopting tobacco-free initiatives in college campuses are:⁸ Tell, Treat, Train and Team-up.

TELL: All members of the campus community should be notified through employee and student handbooks, website, and other relevant publications. The initiative should be noted in prospective student materials, in both printed and electronic forms, as well as staff handbooks and the JHSPH website and portal. Key provisions of the initiative should be communicated to alumni/ae, and visitors.

A comprehensive marketing and signage effort can help ensure that all visitors and others arriving on property owned or leased by the School are aware of the tobacco-free initiative. The School's Wall of Wonder, emails and other electronic platforms can also be used to reinforce this message. A slide show on the Wall of Wonder could promote success stories of School students and employees who have stopped using tobacco. New blue lines could be painted around entrances of buildings.

All existing vendors and contractors should be notified of the new initiative. Specific information on the availability of smoking cessation services and insurance coverage (students and employees) for counseling and pharmaceuticals to support community members in quitting should be provided as part of the initiative roll out. Also, the School should amend, as needed, vendor contracts and bid processes to reflect the initiative and expectations for compliance.

TREAT: Prevention and education initiatives that actively support non-use and address the risks of all forms of tobacco use should be provided. These prevention and education efforts can be implemented via Student Assembly events, orientation for new students, Dean Town Hall meetings, as well as School-sponsored lunch time events. Additionally, online and in-person cessation/counseling services can be instituted.

Programs and services that include practical, evidence- and theory-informed approaches to end tobacco use, including screenings through health and counseling services, free/reduced-cost tobacco cessation counseling or group programs, free/reduced-cost nicotine replacement therapy, and medication options should be promoted and provided, starting in advance of implementing the initiative.

Tobacco-use cessation products, medications, and counseling services should be included in student and staff health insurance plans. Tobacco cessation services are a component of the Affordable Care Act.

TRAIN: Train supervisors, faculty, administrators and student leaders on the initiative and how to encourage tobacco users' respect for the initiative.

Develop and maintain a tobacco task force on campus to identify and address needs and concerns related to the tobacco initiative, compliance, enforcement and cessation.

TEAM-UP: Team-up with/engage key stakeholders in the JHSPH community (including tobacco users and non-users among staff, students and faculty, as well as union representatives) in the process, from development of the initiative to adoption and implementation. Survey data can be gathered regarding the use of all forms of tobacco and nicotine by students, faculty and staff before and after the initiative is implemented.

Collaborate with local, state, and national public health entities and tobacco prevention and control organizations in support of maintaining a healthy tobacco-free environment.

Plan, maintain, and support effective and timely implementation, administration, and consistent response to the tobacco-free initiative. Provide information to the entire School community on mechanisms to report activities that conflict with the tobacco-free campus initiative.

Summary

Based on the preceding information, we recommend that:

- Building on its existing smoke-free policy, the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health discourages the use of all tobacco products including, but not limited to, electronic cigarettes and oral tobacco (spit and spitless, smokeless, chew, snuff) on all School grounds, School-owned or leased properties, and in School-owned, leased or rented vehicles.
- All tobacco and tobacco industry promotions, advertising, marketing and distribution are prohibited on JHSPH property.
- JHSPH promotes cessation services/resources for all members of the School community; such services are included as part of health insurance plans.
- The initiative should be subject to annual review.

References

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