

**For mental health and
substance use
disorder professionals**



Tobacco-Free Grounds Provide Healthy Facilities

Myths and facts about commercial tobacco-free grounds for your mental health and substance use disorder program.

Myth	Facts
“Clients will go elsewhere if we go tobacco-free.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is a growing movement within mental health and substance use disorder (SUD) treatment programs to address the whole health of staff and clients by making their facilities tobacco-free.• Data and experience show that census numbers do not drop when a site goes tobacco-free. In fact, clients and staff have used the implementation of a tobacco-free policy as a motivation to quit smoking themselves.
“There is no benefit for our organization to address tobacco right now.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adopting tobacco-free grounds policies for staff and clients increases their chance at quitting tobacco use, increases productivity, and saves your organization money.• Tobacco-free grounds promote a cleaner and healthier environment for staff members and people that receive services at your organization.• Tobacco-free policies help clients integrate into other community tobacco-free spaces like housing, worksites, and social gathering venues.
“As a staff person, smoking is the only thing that can help me cope with stressful work situations.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It’s part of our job to model appropriate coping skills in our work environment and using tobacco is not a healthy coping skill.• Positive coping mechanisms can include a walk break, meditation, or talking to a co-worker.• Mental health improves after quitting smoking and anxiety, depression, and stress significantly decrease in those who stop using tobacco.

Myth	Facts
<p>“If our organization is tobacco-free, clients will just smoke across the street or other places off campus.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tobacco is a drug. Many facilities implement tobacco policies that mirror their alcohol and other drug policies. • Nicotine replacement therapy can help manage cravings while people are on-site. • There are free resources in Minnesota to connect clients to nicotine replacement therapy.
<p>“Tobacco-free grounds policies are not enforceable.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With adequate time leading up to implementation, staff training around changing social norms, and signage, tobacco-free policies are mostly self-enforcing. • Many organizations have found tobacco-free grounds to be easier to enforce than having designated smoking areas. • When people smoke on campus it opens the door to treatment conversation. Enforcing a tobacco-free policy is not about policing people.

Tobacco in this work refers specifically to the use of manufactured, commercial tobacco products, and not to the sacred, medicinal, and traditional use of tobacco by American Indians and other groups.

Get Started

You don't have to go it alone. Lung Mind Alliance partners have resources to help you be successful. Programs such as yours and leaders such as you are available to mentor and provide real-world answers to all your questions.



Connect with organizations like yours. For more info visit LungMindAlliance.org or contact Reba.MathernJacobson@Lung.org

For a complete list of research and resources, please visit: <http://bit.ly/LMAResearchandResources>

Lung Mind Alliance

The Lung Mind Alliance is a group of leaders and advocates in public health, mental health, substance abuse, and tobacco control who have joined together around the goal of reducing disparities related to the impact of commercial tobacco on people with mental illness and/or substance use disorders. **We invite you to join us in this statewide movement.**



The American Lung Association provides coordination for the Lung Mind Alliance through funding from the Center for Prevention at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota.