



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

UNITED STATES NAVAL HOSPITAL

FPO AE 09589-1000

13 Oct 09

From: Commanding Officer, U.S. Naval Hospital Guantanamo Bay
To: Naval Hospital Staff

Subj: **NOTIFICATION OF TOBACCO-FREE POLICY AS OF 1 JANUARY 2010**

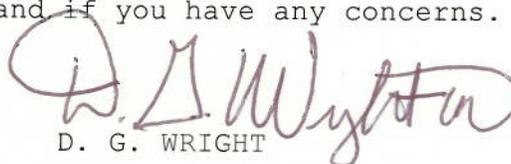
1. U.S. Naval Hospital Guantanamo Bay (USNH GTMO) is committed to healthy lifestyles and military readiness. To that end, beginning on 20 November 2009, with the "Great American Smokeout", USNH GTMO will begin the process of becoming a completely tobacco-free Command, effective 1 January 2010. This policy change affects all patients, visitors, and staff (including volunteers, local nationals, and contractors). Everyone visiting the compound will be asked to refrain from using tobacco products on all hospital grounds. This includes buildings, parking areas, outdoor areas, and sidewalks from building H-4 forward, including the hospital dock. This Command will no longer have designated places to use tobacco.

2. This initiative joins the Chief of Naval Operations and the Navy Surgeon General in assisting all tobacco users to "kick the habit." Tobacco use is the number one PREVENTABLE cause of death in the world. Becoming tobacco-free clearly demonstrates our commitment to the health and wellness of our people. As a healthcare organization, we have an obligation to provide a healthy, tobacco-free environment for everyone who enters this facility.

3. The decision to go tobacco-free is not an attempt to "force" anyone to quit using tobacco products. This change may be difficult for people who use tobacco. To make the transition as easy as possible, beginning 4 November, the Wellness Department will offer two tobacco cessation classes each Wednesday. One-on-one assistance is also available.

4. Visitors to our hospital are frequently under stress, which may increase the desire to smoke. We are working with Naval Station leaders to help educate the public and give them time to adjust to this policy change. You will be given information to help our patients deal with this initiative and talking points to use in the event you are asked questions by friends or neighbors about this important milestone.

5. Please feel free to contact the Wellness/Deployment Health Department or your Chain-of-Command if you have any concerns.


D. G. WRIGHT