

Community Smoke-free Projects Program:



Smoke-free Umina Park

Project background

OneCare is a provider of aged care services in Tasmania, supporting more than 2000 people across the state. Umina Park in Burnie is the largest of five OneCare sites across Tasmania and is the last site to work towards becoming a smoke-free workplace.

Aged care staff are required to stay on site for their meal (and smoking) breaks. The purpose of the project was to create a smoke-free workplace, including refreshed outdoor areas that provide a place of peace and quiet for all staff – a place to take a break away from work.



OneCare's aim was to support their largest site at Umina Park (Burnie) to become a smoke-free workplace.

Successes:

- Prioritising staff consultation throughout the process was a key to project success.
- Staff, including people who smoked, supported the idea of a new outdoor area for staff and residents.

Learnings:

- Continuous communication throughout the implementation phase *and* post implementation is important.
- There are many different approaches to supporting staff when implementing a new process within a workplace.
- Opportunity to educate staff on incoming legislative changes around vaping.

What did we start with?

Experience with the other four sites indicated that some sites were easier to transition to smoke-free sites than others. Factors to consider include organisational readiness, number of staff, size of site and smoking culture. One of the hurdles we were prepared for was the potential higher number of staff who smoke, based on the higher portion of people who smoke in the local municipality.

OneCare successfully applied for \$5,000 through the TasCOSS Community Smoke-free Projects Program. The Project Manager used this grant as leverage to secure another \$5,000 from OneCare to ensure project success. That is, total funding of \$10,000 enabled personnel resources from the Corporate Office to facilitate the project as the Umina Park Facility Manager and supporting staff are at capacity providing clinical services.

The Project Team gathered data from other OneCare facilities who had completed the smoke-free process. These included document templates, seminar content, and an implementation program.

What did we finish with?

Communication plan

- Prioritised the consultation process with staff throughout project
- Started with sending letters to employees about implementation of a smoke free workplace (19/06/2023 – 2 months before Start Date 21/08/2023)
- Followed up with 4 x interactive workshops to explain the transition process, what this looked like for staff and the support available.
- Anonymous feedback survey – any concerns were answered via email to all staff, ensuring the response provided solution to the concerns

Resources

- [Quit Tasmania resources](#), including a [Supporting People to Stop Smoking & Vaping](#) training session with the Umina Park Leadership Team.
- Employee Assistance Provider was available to staff who were concerned about the change to smoke-free.
- Financial support to individuals for nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) patches, gum, and lozenges.

What were the successes along the way?

- Umina Park is now a smoke-free workplace.
- Prioritising staff consultation throughout the process was a key to project success.
- Staff, including people who smoked, supported the idea of a new outdoor area for staff and residents.
- A new garden space is being finalised and will include a pergola, outdoor settings, and bench seats.
- Additional garden spaces have been refurbished throughout the facility (gardens and furniture) since the commencement of the project and are now used by staff and residents.



What were the challenges?

- Some long-term smokers did not prepare for the implementation start date. This led to a few staff seeking either additional support or requesting that the project be postponed.
- A small number of staff and unions felt that smoking is a human right. While we addressed this pushback, we were not prepared for such a strong response.
- As Umina Park is a large facility, one outdoor area for staff was not sufficient. This resulted in additional outdoor areas being refreshed.

What do we wish we had known at the start?

- Our approach to the project would result in a positive outcome three months after implementation.
- Onsite visits and constant updates to staff had a positive impact. Staff could voice any concerns they had around the change to smoke-free and gain a better understanding of the transition process.
- There will always be a small portion of staff who smoke that will not engage in any support until the smoking ban directly impacts them on the Start Date.

Sharing what we learned

- Continuous communication throughout the implementation phase and post implementation is important.
- There are many different approaches to supporting staff when implementing a new process within a workplace, including supporting staff on their journey to quit smoking.
- Maximise opportunities to educate staff on incoming legislative changes around vaping.
- Grant funds can be leveraged to obtain more funding from internal or external stakeholders.

Summary

OneCare successfully implemented a smoke-free workplace by using learnings from previous processes at other sites and prioritising staff communication. As Umina Park is OneCare's largest site, it was anticipated more resources would be required and the TasCOSS grant provided leverage to obtain more funding from the organisation to ensure there was sufficient resources to complete the project.



New resource: [How to get your organisation smoke-free ready.](#)

Community Smoke-free Projects Program

Part of the TasCOSS [Supporting Smoke-free Community Services](#) project was to provide 10 community service organisations (CSOs) with \$5,000 each to conduct a small project to progress towards smoke-free work areas and services. The trust-based funding model for the grants was simple and equitable for organisations with limited time and resources. TasCOSS and Quit Tasmania collaborated with each CSO to develop an idea that was relevant to that organisation and the people who used their services.

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