

No smoking to be extended

✘ Guidance to give residential mental health patients and workers the same protection from second-hand smoke as others throughout Scotland was published today.

Smoking has been banned in public places since 2006. However, residential mental health facilities are exempt from the ban and smoking is allowed in designated rooms.

Today's guidance is designed to help residential mental health facilities to become smoke-free although there are no plans to introduce a statutory ban.

Public Health Minister Shona Robison said:

"This is a further step towards our vision of a smoke-free Scotland. Patients and staff in mental health services should have the same opportunities to enjoy the benefits of a smoke-free environment as the rest of the NHS in Scotland.

"Allowing smoking in residential mental health services, when it is completely banned in all other NHS settings, simply perpetuates inequalities.

"Removing smoking rooms in mental health settings will undoubtedly be challenging but there is evidence that smoke-free policies can be effectively introduced and this guidance will help health boards to achieve that.

"We're committed to reducing smoking rates in Scotland and the misery caused by tobacco related illness and this guidance will help to make mental health facilities healthier places for people to live and work in."

The guidance has been developed following a consultation – Achieving smoke-free mental health services in Scotland – which was carried out in 2009.