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Local News

CMC-Union Is Going Tobacco-Free On February 14

February 01, 2006

Beginning February 14, 2006, Carolinas Medical Center-Union is prohibiting smoking and tobacco use by patients, visitors and employees on the grounds of the hospital and at all of its owned, leased or managed facilities. CMC-Union announced its plan for a tobacco-free campus in August of 2005 and preparations have been underway since that time. This move toward tobacco-free status represents CMC-Union's commitment to provide a healthy environment for patients, visitors, employees and physicians.

"Smoking and other tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death and disease in Union County," says John Roberts, president and CEO of CMC-Union. "Because CMC-Union is committed to improving the health of the communities we serve, we just could not ignore this fact any longer and still maintain our mission. CMC-Union will join more than 30 other hospitals in North Carolina that are implementing similar tobacco-free policies. We strongly encourage other businesses and employers to join us in this campaign."

According to the American Cancer Society, about half of all Americans who continue to smoke will die because of the habit. Each year, about 438,000 people die in the U.S. from tobacco use. Nearly 1 of every 5 deaths is related to smoking. Smoking also kills more Americans than alcohol, car accidents, suicide, AIDS, homicide, and illegal drugs combined. In addition, second-hand smoke contributes to numerous respiratory infections, asthma, bronchitis and pneumonia. CMC-Union believes eliminating smoking and tobacco-use on its campus will greatly reduce exposure to second-hand smoke and support those who are trying to quit.

Patients and visitors to CMC-Union facilities will notice new signs to inform them of the tobacco-free policy. CMC-Union is promoting the new policy in its hospital admissions packets and in several other ways. For CMC-Union employees and volunteers who wish to quit, the hospital has been providing smoking cessation classes, nicotine replacement therapy and access to other resources.

CMC-Union will also display 243 luminarias in front of its Outpatient Treatment Pavilion on February 13, from 6-8 p.m., to symbolize the number of people in North Carolina who die from tobacco use each week.

Carolinan Medical Center-Union, formerly Union Regional Medical Center, is a 247-bed health organization in Monroe, NC. CMC-Union employs over 1,200 professionals in Union County. CMC-Union has been a facility of Carolinas HealthCare System since 1995.

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