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**AREA BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE AGENCIES ADOPT  
TOBACCO-FREE ENVIRONMENT POLICY BEGINNING JULY 1**

**GRAND RAPIDS, MI – June 2, 2008** – Pine Rest Christian Mental Health Services and Forest View Hospital, with the support of Network 180 and Kent County Health Department, will be jointly adopting a “tobacco-free patient and work environment” at each organization’s respective inpatient and outpatient locations. This policy will apply to patients, visitors and staff.

“Tobacco use is a major public health challenge. Each year, cigarette smoking accounts for nearly one of every five deaths in the United States,” said Cathy Raevsky, administrative health officer for Kent County Health Department. “The Kent County Health Department applauds the voluntary steps that Pine Rest and Forest View are taking to implement a tobacco-free work and patient-care environment. These measures ultimately support healthy lifestyles in the broader community.”

Research indicates that 70 percent to 90 percent of persons with chronic schizophrenia and 40 percent to 50 percent of persons diagnosed with depression or anxiety are smokers. In addition, 80 percent of persons with alcohol dependence are smokers.<sup>1</sup>

“We are glad to cooperate with the community efforts of the seriousness of this addiction, and the need to understand its impact on mental health,” said Alex Masterson, MD, medical director of child and adolescent services at Forest View Hospital.

“Historically, patients at behavioral health and substance use treatment facilities have allowed smoking because it was not viewed as a “crisis” illness, so this will be quite a change,” said Jim Bottenhorn, MA, LLP, director of hospital admissions for Pine Rest. “Our role as providers is to help our patients begin the recovery process by helping them develop more effective ways of coping with stress and uncomfortable emotions.”

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Pine Rest and Forest View will be providing nicotine replacement therapies to help alleviate the discomfort of withdrawal for patients receiving care on the adult inpatient units, as well as information on community tobacco cessation and recovery programs. Visitors will be asked to leave all tobacco products and smoking materials in the car while visiting.

According to research completed by Doug Davis, MD, assistant professor of psychiatry at Florida State University and the University of Florida, one-third of all smokers have a co-occurring mental health disorder. Further, among persons diagnosed with co-occurring mental illness and substance use disorder, 80 percent to 90 percent smoke.<sup>2</sup>

“Pine Rest and Forest View are committed to compassionate care, to the recovery of our patients and their families, and view their health and wellness as a key component of that recovery. Therefore, we cannot ignore the issue of tobacco use on our campuses,” said Denise Gribbin, MD, chief medical officer for Pine Rest. “Research tells us that tobacco use affects treatment outcomes and medication efficacy. Medicines are more effective when people do not smoke and do observe healthier lifestyle choices.”

“As an addictionist and psychiatrist, I am very glad that Pine Rest and Forest View are going to be tobacco-free on July 1,” said Stan Gunadi, MD, medical director for Forest View Hospital. “We cannot continue to contribute, to feed an addiction that is even worse in its medical and financial consequences than even alcohol. It has been proven that public health measures like this have been effective in reducing the smoking rate of the population. Congratulations to the management of both agencies.”

Mark Witte, populations service manager for Network 180 agreed. “Our goal is to deal with a special problem for people with mental illnesses and/or addictive disorders, and that is the unbelievably high rate of smoking in this population - which seriously complicates both treatment and recovery, and, ultimately, leads to other chronic illnesses and premature death. We applaud and support Forest View’s and Pine Rest’s efforts to provide a healthier environment for our patients, for their families and for the people who serve them.”

For more information about Forest View Hospital, visit [www.forestviewhospital.com](http://www.forestviewhospital.com). For more information about Pine Rest Christian Mental Health Services, visit [www.pinerest.org](http://www.pinerest.org). For more information about Network 180, visit [www.network180.org](http://www.network180.org). For more information about the Kent County Health Department, visit [www.kentcountymi.gov](http://www.kentcountymi.gov).

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1. “Tobacco-Free Living in Psychiatric Settings” National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors ([www.nasmhpd.org](http://www.nasmhpd.org)), July 2007 (Updated September 2007).
2. Presentation at the National Certification for Tobacco Specialists Training by Douglas Davies MD, University of Florida Department of Psychiatry and Medical Director of the Stewart-Marchman Center in Daytona Beach, FL. Nicotine Addiction and Comorbid Psychiatric Disorders, May 14, 2008. Traverse City, Michigan.