

# **To Provide A Healthy Environment For All, PRH Will Become A Smoke-Free Site Sept. 1**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**PEMBROKE – This fall, the Pembroke Regional Hospital will follow in the footsteps of many other hospitals and healthcare facilities in the province by becoming a smoke-free site Sept. 1.**

**“As a Hospital and healthcare facility we are committed to promoting a healthy and safe environment for our patients, visitors and staff and we are committed to supporting the prevention of smoke-related diseases and health hazards,” said President and CEO Pierre Noel.**

**“As a healthcare facility, we have an obligation to promote healthy lifestyles which is why, with the leadership and support of our medical staff, we will be prohibiting smoking on Hospital property and working with the West Champlain Healthy Community Corporation to enforce a similar ban on the parking lots they control,” Mr. Noel said.**

**Currently, in compliance with the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, smoking is prohibited within the Hospital and within 9 metres (30 feet) of any entrance or exit.**

**For patients who smoke, the Hospital and its medical staff will be actively supporting smoking cessation, by offering self-help materials and nicotine replacement therapy as well as counselling by qualified staff.**

**In rare circumstances based on compassionate reasons, a physician may allow some patients to smoke following a 24-hour assessment period in a location out of public view.**

**Otherwise, patients who choose to smoke will be doing so against medical advice and will have to be unhooked from medical equipment such as IVs and sign a waiver to be able to go off hospital property.**

**Dr. Colin Macpherson, family physician and President of Professional Staff has championed the move to go site-wide with the smoking ban, indicating the decision was not made lightly and was made from a patient care perspective, with a focus on patient safety.**

**“This is being done in order to provide a healthy and safe environment for all who come to us for care as well as for our staff and visitors,” Dr. Macpherson said, adding that for the patient who smokes, the best time to quit is when they require hospital admission.**

**“For the health of our patients, the time to do this is now, and as a healthcare facility, it would not be prudent of us, nor would it send the right message to do anything less.”**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:**

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