

# **SMOKEFREE UNIVERSITIES IN IRELAND**

**“Learning from practical  
examples”**

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ASH Ireland

# ASH IRELAND

- Established in 1992
- Widely recognised as Ireland's leading anti-tobacco advocacy group
- One of the main drivers of the workplace smoking legislation introduced in Ireland in 2004

# ASH IRELAND

- Ash Ireland is driven by a small executive and supported by a Board of medical, legal, environmental and NGO personnel
- ASH has a good working relationships with the Government while also retaining a totally independent voice on all tobacco related issues

# MAJOR CAMPAIGNS - CURRENT

- Introduction of smoke-free universities/colleges
- ASH has been one of the main drivers of the standardised packaging legislation in Ireland
- ASH Ireland initiated the idea of introducing legislation to ban smoking in cars transporting children
- The banning of smoking in all children's playgrounds
- The banning of smoking in all sports stadia, local, regional and national.

# WHY SMOKE-FREE UNIVERSITIES?

- Protect health of staff and students
- Reduce litter
- Help change social norms around smoking
- Encourage quitting smoking and reduce uptake of smoking

# HOW THE INITIATIVE WAS DEVELOPED

- ASH Board decision
- Communication with all colleges January 2011
- Seminar with 5 interested colleges June 2012
- All colleges contacted again March 2013
- Trinity College, UCD making progress

# IRISH COLLEGES PROGRESS

- Westport College of Further Education
- Trinity College Dublin
- University College Dublin
- + more on the way!

# **WESTPORT COLLEGE OF FURTHER EDUCATION**

- Went smoke-free in April 2014
- 300 full-time students, 150 part-time
- 2½ acre site
- 2 cigarette butts found!!
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5VHq2GdcqXQ&feature=em-upload\\_owner](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5VHq2GdcqXQ&feature=em-upload_owner)



# UNIVERSITY COLLEGE DUBLIN

- 30,000 students; 320 acre campus
- ASH presentation to the Health and Safety Committee 2013
- Student Union Referendum
  - 55% in favour of smoke-free UCD
- Decision taken in September 2014 to ban sale of cigarettes on campus
- Proceeding with a full ban

# TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN

- 16,000 students; 51 acre campus
- Majority in favour
  - College wide survey (staff + students)
  - Consultation meetings
- Considering smoking shelters
- Student and staff ambassadors for compliance
- Final recommendation to the Board to be submitted

# UNITED STATES COLLEGES

- Almost 1,500 colleges now smoke-free!
  - Harvard University
  - Stanford University
  - University of Chicago
  - City University of New York

<http://www.no-smoke.org/pdf/smokefreecollegesuniversities.pdf>

# HOW CAN THIS BE ACHIEVED?

- Top-down approach – good leadership imperative
- Voluntary initiative
- Evaluation
- Agree policy

# HOW CAN THIS BE ACHIEVED?

- Implementation
  - Communication
  - Cessation support
  - Training
- Generate pride in being smoke-free

# HOW CAN ADVOCATES ASSIST THE THIRD LEVEL SECTOR?

- Plant the idea
- Achieving buy-in to the positive aspects is important
- Make contact at the appropriate level
- Build relationships
- Offer advice along the lines of the US model  
[www.tobaccofreenow.org](http://www.tobaccofreenow.org)

# CHALLENGES FOR UNIVERSITIES

- Leadership – senior management support
- Dealing with objections - Remember opposition to the workplace smoking ban and the ban on smoking in airlines? Now virtually 100% support all around the world!
- Implementation
- Compliance

# COMPLIANCE

- Most people comply with a change in rules
- Many smokers see this as an opportunity to reduce or to quit
- Staff, not students, can create difficulties (long established smoking practice)
- Encouragement as opposed to penalties!



# COMPLIANCE

- Signage
- Offer of smoking cessation support
- Don't be afraid of failure!

# **ELECTRONIC CIGARETTES**

- Electronic cigarettes in or out?
- ASH Ireland view is less supportive of e-cigarettes
- Total ban more easier to implement

# THE PRIZE

- A greener university environment
- Significant savings on litter management
- A smoke-free campus being entirely normal a few years after the decision is taken
- Setting the standards for others to follow
- Reduced smoking prevalence among staff and students