

JUN 27 '89 04:19

P.2/3

June 27, 1989

MEMORANDUM

TO: Marty Gleason
FR: Peter G. Sparber
RE: Hospital smoking policies

With the exception of New Jersey hospitals, the overwhelming majority of public and private hospitals nationwide permit smoking in at least some parts of their facilities.

According to a 1987 American Hospital Association survey of 5,600 institutions, about 16 per cent maintain "smoke free" environments. The term "smoke free" means that smoking is disallowed by patients, staff and guests but may be allowed -- particularly in psychiatric or substance abuse wards -- with the written permission of the attending or responsible physician.

No other smoking-related question was asked in the 1987 survey. However, hospitals typically restrict smoking where contamination and safety may be a problem e.g. near oxygen, in operating rooms, food preparation areas, etc. My contact at AHA also noted that few hospitals allow cigarette sales in gift shops or through vending machines.

The AHA staff interested in this issue asked to have the same "smoke free" question included in the 1989 hospital survey. Their request was rejected which is some indication of the priority placed by AHA on smoking in hospitals.

AHA has a "smoke free" hospitals kit entitled "Hospitals and smoking -- a bad match." It is available for \$35 by calling 1-(800) 242-2626 and asking for catalogue #C 166901.

New Jersey is the one state active on the issue, according to AHA. Working on a \$30,000 Department of Health grant, a single staff member at New Jersey Hospital Association is charged with encouraging all 119 institutions in that state to declare "smoke free" policies by January 1992.

To date, she reports that 13 are "smoke free" and another 62 will be "smoke free" by May 1, 1990.

However, NJHA is concerned that it will receive no additional funds and this effort will end far short of the goal.

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Mr. Gleason
June 27, 1989
page 2

Two other states are somewhat less active, according to AHA. They are Minnesota (no surprise) and Pennsylvania. However, I could find little evidence of anything close to New Jersey's initiative.

cc: Kay Thomas

Date: 6/27
Time: 4:18

SPARBER AND ASSOCIATES, INC.
3325 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW - Suite 800
Washington, DC 20004

FAX MESSAGE

TO: Marty Gleason
Kay Thomas

FROM: Pete Sparber

TOTAL NUMBER OF PAGES INCLUDING THIS PAGE: 3

If you have any problems receiving this fax, please contact
Lori Davis at (202) 393-9240.

Our fax number is (202) 393-4385.