

MEMORANDUM

TO: Gretchen Newman, Laboratory Supervisors and LPH Faculty.

FROM: Henry Blackburn

DATE: December 29, 1977

RE: LPH and Smoking

I've asked Gretchen to explore the legal situation in terms of providing smoking space in the laboratory and with regard to hiring of smokers and nonsmokers. I believe that our status as an institution applying for and securing grants and contracts and program support to change smoking behavior compels us to consider our integrity and credibility in respect to laboratory smoking policy.

I would like us to consider taking the view that, other things being equal, a nonsmoker will get any new job available in the laboratory at any level. I would like us to consider taking the view that no one will work for MRFIT or be hired by MRFIT who is an active cigarette smoker or who requires to smoke during working hours. In addition to exploring our "rights" to hire policy, I have asked Gretchen and am now asking all supervisors and faculty to keep this in mind in all future hiring in the laboratory. Our current problem is bad enough, with older employees to whom we have a commitment. We can in no way afford to take on new problems of smokers.

I would also like your cooperation in a gradual push, over the next year, to encourage and help staff smokers to quit as well as to make smoking progressively less acceptable and possible on the laboratory premises.

I regret that it comes to this, but natural pressures, reason and persuasion, and offers of help haven't worked. I think we're simply going to take a long term view that smokers will become so uncomfortable in this environment that they will have to quit smoking. I guess I see no other logical or possible way to go if we are to continue the present major direction of the laboratory toward changing health-related behavior, and in teaching, research and public service on this major public health concern.

I'm sure that smokers and nonsmokers and exsmokers alike will sympathize and support this approach and work toward a final laboratory nonsmoking date in 1978.

This is my present plan. Your opinions are solicited. You'll be kept informed about what we learn on the legal questions involved.

Perhaps an award should be made to the current LPH smoker who comes up with the best plan for implementing this policy and with a slogan for the laboratory being free of smoke by the end of 1978?