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## St. Elizabeth's Medical Center in Brighton has smoking tobacco-free

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Posted by Matt Rocheleau January 3, 2012 12:53 PM

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By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

With the start of the new year, St. Elizabeth's Medical Center's campus has gone completely tobacco-free as part of a vow the hospital in Brighton, along

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with nine others in Boston, recently made to ban cigarette smoking and tobacco product use on their properties by April.

In November, officials from the 10 hospitals in partnership with the city's health commission announced a campaign that would extend existing bans on tobacco use indoors to outdoor spaces -- including parking lots and garages, walkways, and tunnels -- with the goal of all of the hospitals' respective properties becoming tobacco-free by Patriots Day 2012.

"Employees volunteered to serve on our 'Tobacco Free Task Force' to work with city public health officials and make this happen," St. Elizabeth's president John Polanowicz said in a statement. "With so many well-documented health concerns around smoking, second-hand smoke and smokeless tobacco use, going tobacco free is the right thing to do for our patients and families, employees and staff and everyone who visits St. Elizabeth's."

The hospital's **task force** led the move to officially become tobacco-free on New Year's Day when St Elizabeth's instituted policies prohibiting patients, visitors, and employees from smoking on hospital property at all times.

In June, the hospital had reduced the number of designated smoking areas on campus, and, as of Sunday, Jan. 1, closed all of those areas to smoking, officials said. The hospital said it also distributed and promoted tools and resources for patients and staff to quit smoking.

[The Boston Herald](#) reported that St. Elizabeth's is part of [a similar initiative](#) that is being undertaken by 48 hospitals in the state. [The Globe](#) reported that the [association](#) said 48 hospitals in the state have agreed to join the initiative.

[The Globe](#) reported in November that, according to state data, smoking-related illness is the leading cause of death in Massachusetts, killing more residents each year than homicides, AIDS, motor vehicle accidents, suicides, and poisonings combined.

The numbers showed that though smoking rates have declined steadily over the past decade, there are still about 800,000 active adult smokers in the state.

For more information on St. Elizabeth's tobacco-free policies, visit: [www.StewardStElizabeths.org/Tobaccofree](http://www.StewardStElizabeths.org/Tobaccofree)



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*E-mail Matt Rocheleau at [mjrochele@gmail.com](mailto:mjrochele@gmail.com).*

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