



The Times

Trenton Psychiatric goes smoke-free

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STAFF WRITER

TRENTON -- Trenton Psychiatric Hospital goes totally smoke-free today, making it the third state psychiatric hospital to prohibit smoking anywhere on the grounds as part of a focus on recovery and wellness.

The new restriction comes after more than a year of smoking-cessation programs at the hospital and three months after Greystone Park Psychiatric Hospital in Parsippany and Ancora Psychiatric Hospital in Winslow went smoke-free. Administrators at those two hospitals say patients and staff have adjusted well to the change, the state Department of Human Services said yesterday.

"Nicotine addiction is a serious problem within the mental-health community," Gov. Jon Corzine said. "By going smoke-free, our state's psychiatric facilities are helping patients with mental illness break the cycle of nicotine addiction and live longer, healthier lives."

"This initiative mirrors what is being done at hospitals, medical centers and corporations throughout the country and supports ... efforts to embrace a system that focuses on wellness and recovery," said DHS Commissioner Jennifer Velez.

As required by state statute, a training curriculum was designed and all employees received training in multiple tobacco-cessation techniques.

A study by the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors Medical Directors Council in 2006 concluded that people with mental illness live an average of 25 years less than the general population. Approximately 75 percent are estimated to be addicted to nicotine, contributing to premature death.

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