



Title:

SMUDGING

Number: **A 15**

Approval Date: March 17, 2021

Revision Date:

Preamble: The practice of smudging is a sacred experience and a healing practice that has been part of Turtle Island since the beginning of time. It is primarily used to restore physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual balance through the release of negative energy from emotional distress or crises. It also facilitates prayers as the smoke is believed to carry the prayers to the Creator. Some staff, clients and participants use this sacred practice to maintain personal health. Smudging brings *mino bimaadiziwin* (living the good life), which means to live in balance with one's self, others and one's environment and to have a relationship with all of those things in a good, beautiful way. Klinik acknowledges and respects the rights of all staff and participants to engage in this traditional ceremonial practice as needed. Klinik also recognizes its responsibility to support a shared work place and as such has made efforts to consider and maintain all staff and participants safety.

Klinik would like to acknowledge the work of Mount Carmel Clinic in the original research and development of this procedure which has been adapted to our organizational environment.

Purpose:

- Klinik recognizes that it is situated on Treaty One land in the heart of the Métis Nation and chooses to operate with respect for all Peoples. This means creating an environment and clinic culture wherein Indigenous health practices are a welcomed and integrated component of the work that we do.
- We acknowledge the critical role of culture as a determinant of health and the damaging impact of healthcare services that are not grounded in the principles of cultural safety.
- This policy governs the ceremonial use of sacred medicines at Klinik in designated spaces.

Definitions:

Sacred Medicines: can include tobacco, sage, sweetgrass and cedar

Smudging: is the smoke obtained by burning sacred plants, such as sage, tobacco, sweetgrass, and cedar

Designated Space: Spaces specifically identified as smudge rooms

Ventilated spaces : Separate inline exhausted space activated by fan with a disconnected fresh air return to the outside

Policy:

- The guidelines outlined here apply to all clinic staff, students, volunteers, contractors, clients, board and community members.
- Smudging and Pipe Ceremonies; Background and Context: Clinic recognizes Tobacco, Sage, Sweetgrass and Cedar as the four (4) sacred medicines of Indigenous peoples of Manitoba that are used for ceremonial, health, and healing purposes. Clinic recognizes that Indigenous peoples in Manitoba also use other medicines for a variety of healing and spiritual practices.
- Products associated with spiritual practices from other Indigenous cultures are also included in this policy as long as those products are legal in Canada.
- Smudging is an Indigenous practice involving the burning of sacred plants, which may include sweetgrass, sage, tobacco and cedar. A smudge may be burned for purification and to help create a positive mind set. The sacred plants may also be used in pipe ceremonies by pipe carriers, individuals who have been entrusted with that responsibility.
- Under the Province of Manitoba's 'The Non-Smoker's Health Protection Act' smudging and the use of tobacco pipe ceremonies are permitted. Clinic recognizes smudging and pipe ceremonies are part of the Indigenous traditional way of life and are welcomed in our centre.
- Staff must be directly present or responsible for smudging activities when they are occurring

Smudging Location Procedures:

- Clinic Cultural Room

Procedure:

Managers will:

- Ensure that their staff are permitted to use sacred medicines as needed in designated spaces and are following appropriate training and protocols
- Work with Human Resources, union, managers and employees to plan for and manage any medical accommodations needed for staff

The Director of Operations will:

- Ensure that designated ventilated spaces are checked for effectiveness a minimum of quarterly each year

- Ensure protocols are posted and followed in all designated spaces
- Ensure the space is properly stocked with medicine and supplies

Fire Safety and Use of Ceremonial Medicines:

- Protocols must be followed in all designated spaces
- Any staff person accessing the burning of sacred medicines must know the location of the nearest fire extinguisher
- Staff must ensure the sacred medicine is completely extinguished before exiting the space
- Staff must be aware of nearby flammable materials and keep embers in a heat proof container until cold to the touch before discarding
- The bowl or vessel used for smudging shall be capable of withstanding the heat of the smudge bundle without sustaining damage and should be placed on a surface that is non-combustible

Policy Implementation:

It is Klinic's intent to maintain a shared environment through a spirit of cooperation, mutual respect and understanding.

Complaints about a breach of this policy by staff should be directed in writing, to the staff member's supervisor/manager. It shall be the responsibility of the supervisor to direct the staff to comply with the policy. Complaints about a breach of this policy by visitors or the public may be directed to the Executive Assistant.

Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action.

References:

Mount Carmel Clinic's Policy GA-06 Ceremonial Use of Sacred Medicines and Practices (August 9, 2016) which also references the following:

- University of Winnipeg: Ceremonial use of Sacred Medicines policy
- University of Manitoba: Smudging/Pipe Ceremonies Policy
- University of Manitoba: clean air procedure
- National Fire Protection Association's code
- Non Smokers Health Protection Act for the Province of Manitoba
- Mosby's Dictionary of Complementary and Alternative Medicine. ©2005, Elsevier