

## MMH Going Tobacco-Free

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 22, 2008 -- Madison, GA -- Joining hospitals across Georgia and the nation, Morgan Memorial Hospital (MMH) will become a tobacco free campus November 20, 2008. After this date, no tobacco use of any kind will be permitted anywhere on the hospital campus – inside or outside.

“We are committed to the health and safety of all of our employees, patients and visitors,” said H.D. Cannington, Morgan Memorial CEO. “Making our campus tobacco-free firmly supports our belief in their health and wellness.”

Planning ahead, the organization has offered free nicotine replacement products, such as gum, patches and prescription medications for employees desiring to quit smoking. Education classes and discounts on health insurance are also provided as incentives.

“While we cannot force our employees to eliminate tobacco from their lives completely, we are hoping to make the transition so easy for them at work that they choose to do so,” said Terry Evans, Chairman of the Morgan County Hospital Authority.

Patients will be advised of the hospital’s tobacco-free policy prior to their admission. Both patients and visitors will have other alternatives such as mints or gum available to them while on the MMH campus.

“We are asking for the community’s support in our tobacco-free initiative as we move forward in our efforts to make Morgan Memorial a healthier place to be,” said Dr. Eddie Cossio, MMH Chief of Staff. “Our commitment to this initiative is a concrete way to demonstrate our ongoing commitment to healthy living.”

Tobacco use is the number one PREVENTABLE cause of death in the world. Over 10,000 Georgians die every year from tobacco use. One out of every 6 of these die because they have smoked. Smoking costs Georgians \$1.8 billion dollars in direct health care costs each year.

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