

Smoke-free may become standard

BY KRISTA BROWN
of The Northwestern

A smoke-free workplace is old news to Aurora Medical Center. The entire campus - sidewalks, parking lots, even the inside of vehicles - has been smoke-free for two years now.

"One key piece that's worked for us is that people here are very aware that they want to create a healthy environment for both themselves

and the patients," said Amy Sommerville, site manager for Aurora Medical Group.

Sommerville said the smoke-free workplace has gone well for Aurora, and Aurora's entire central region now has gone smoke-free.

Before the facility went **smoke-free**, the organization gave its employees ample notice and offered free smoking cessation counseling and nico-

tine replacement therapy for any employees who wanted to give quitting a try.

"We felt very much the need to support the employees," Sommerville said. "We didn't tell anyone they had to stop smoking, but we wanted to help in case they decided to."

According to a statement from the American Red Cross, Wisconsin is quickly falling be-

hind in its efforts to protect the health of its citizens and lower the cost of health care, partly because of its tobacco usage. Senate Bill 150, or the Breathe Free Wisconsin Act, which is currently awaiting state Senate committee approval, would put into effect a statewide smoking ban in any public place or place of employment.

Minnesota went **smoke-free**

Statewide ban awaits Senate committee approval

AT A GLANCE

► For more information on the **Smoke Free** Wisconsin Act, log on to www.cancer.org or call (800) 227-2345.

last month, while Illinois intends to do so in January.

Sommerville said the ban

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