



Low Cost Strategies for Promoting Tobacco Cessation

BACKGROUND

Mass media campaigns, in combination with other interventions such as community education programs, can be effective in increasing tobacco cessation and in reducing consumption of tobacco products.¹ The California Tobacco Control Program (CTCP) promotes cessation statewide through paid television, radio, print and billboard advertising, and public relations campaigns.

Health care providers' advice to their patients can also increase tobacco cessation.² Through the California Smokers' Helpline (1-800-NO-BUTTS), CTCP has developed partnerships with several statewide health care provider organizations to increase cessation advice and referral, including the American Academy of Pediatrics, the California Dental Hygienists Association, and the American Association of Diabetes Educators (California chapters). On a local level, there are many opportunities for county health departments and other organizations to build upon these statewide efforts to promote tobacco cessation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Local organizations throughout California can develop low cost, effective community-based strategies to promote tobacco cessation that complement and enhance the efforts of CTCP and the Helpline. The key is collaborating with others in the community that have a stake in reducing tobacco use. Health care organizations are natural partners for this purpose and can play an important role in increasing the utilization of effective tobacco cessation treatments. There are many organizations that touch large numbers of tobacco users and that present excellent opportunities for collaboration, including:

- Professional organizations of physicians, nurses, physician assistants, dentists, dental hygienists, pharmacists, mental health providers, drug and alcohol counselors, diabetes educators, and other providers of health care or health education services
- Hospitals, clinics, and university health centers
- Health care provider training schools and medical schools
- Pharmaceutical companies and pharmacies
- County public health programs such as the California Screening, Brief Intervention, Referral and Treatment (CASBIRT) Program, the California Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) Program, and the Maternal, Child, and Adolescent Health Program

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- Large employers, small business associations, chambers of commerce, and trade unions
- City councils, boards of supervisors, and other smoke-free policy makers and enforcers

Here are some low cost ideas for promoting tobacco cessation locally:

- Develop a [Performance Partnership](#) with one or more of the organizations described above. A Performance Partnership is organized around a single, measurable outcome, such as increasing the percentage of smoking patients who are referred to an effective cessation program. Partners may employ different strategies to reach the common goal.
- Create a co-branded marketing campaign with materials such as print ads, posters, direct mail pieces, educational materials, and give-aways.
- Create a page on partner organizations' web sites about the campaign.
- Submit articles about available services and testimonials from ex-smokers in print and electronic newsletters.
- Utilize other existing organizational marketing vehicles, such as new member kits, list servs, email, and pay check stubs, to send cessation messages.
- Design and implement a system to identify tobacco using patients, advise them to quit, and proactively refer them to the Helpline or other effective tobacco cessation service.
- Team with the Center for Tobacco Cessation to offer a CME-approved course for health care providers on the "Ask, Advise, Refer" intervention.
- Engage pharmacists in advising patients to quit. Provide educational materials and put cessation ads on pharmacy bags and customer receipts.
- Make sure the list of cessation resources in your county, found on the Helpline web site at www.nobutts.org, is up to date. These lists are distributed to all Helpline callers.
- Work with city or county staff to advertise treatment options on "No Smoking" signage in areas where a new smoke-free policy is being enacted (e.g., beaches, parks, college campuses, hospital campuses, or transit waiting areas).

The Center for Tobacco Cessation can help you develop a customized plan to promote tobacco cessation in your area.

RESOURCES

Center for Tobacco Cessation
(866) 610-C4TC (2482)
www.CenterForCessation.org

Tobacco Education Clearinghouse of California
(800) 258-9090
www.tecc.org

Smoking Cessation Leadership Center
(415) 502-8880
www.smokingcessationleadership.ucsf.edu

¹ Hopkins DP, Briss PA, Ricard CJ, et al. Reviews of evidence regarding interventions to reduce tobacco use and exposure to environmental tobacco smoke. *Am J Prev Med* 2001;20 (2S).

² Whitlock EP, Orleans CT, Pender N, et al. Evaluating primary care behavioral counseling interventions: an evidence-based approach. *Am J Prev Med* 2002;22:267-84.