

CDC's Tips From Former Smokers™ Campaign

August 2017

Utah County Health Department: Increasing Tobacco Cessation by Integrating CDC's *Tips*™ Campaign into an External Health Center

Background

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC's) *Tips from Former Smokers*™ (*Tips*™) campaign encourages tobacco users to quit by sharing the real-life experiences of smokers. In 2017, the National Association of County and City Health Officials partnered with the CDC to provide technical assistance to three local health departments (LHDs) and their associated healthcare providers to examine whether the placement of *Tips*™ materials in clinical settings would increase the number of tobacco cessation conversations between healthcare providers and patients.

To accomplish this project, LHD staff worked with clinical staff to track the baseline number of healthcare provider – patient cessation conversations happening before *Tips*™ materials were placed into the clinics. Then, LHD staff placed *Tips*™ video and print materials (which are always free-of-charge from the CDC) into clinic waiting rooms and patient rooms and educated clinic staff about evidence-based tobacco cessation intervention strategies (e.g., the 5As) and free tobacco cessation resources, such as state QuitLines. For the next eight weeks, clinic staff tracked the number of tobacco cessation conversations occurring between patients and clinic staff. The data from each LHD demonstrates how the placement of *Tips*™ materials in clinical settings is an easy, low-cost approach to increasing tobacco cessation.

Utah County Health Department



The Utah County Health Department (UCHD) serves the second largest county in Utah (population 600,000) and is committed to promoting the health of the community by preventing avoidable disease and injury, monitoring the health of their community, responding to public health emergencies, and assuring

conditions in which people can be healthy. While Utah County's adult smoking rate is 4.5%, UCHD strives to reduce that rate to zero using the CDC's Best Practices for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs and endgame strategies for tobacco prevention and cessation. UCHD's Tobacco Prevention and Control Program focuses on preventing tobacco use among youth, lowering the tobacco use rates, and reducing secondhand smoke exposure. UCHD also has a long-term relationship with the Molina Healthcare Clinic, which serves an area that has higher tobacco use rates and specializes in treating Spanish-speaking, uninsured, and low-income populations.

Integration of *Tips*™ Campaign Materials into Molina Healthcare Clinic

To support the integration of the *Tips*™ campaign, Spanish and English language materials were placed in the waiting room, at the front desk, and in the patient rooms. UCHD provided training to clinic staff and providers on the *Tips*™ campaign and evidence-based cessation intervention strategies. Specifically, medical assistants learned how to initiate tobacco cessation conversations with patients, provide *Tips*™ campaign Spanish-language materials, make referrals to a variety of free, accessible services (e.g., Utah Tobacco Quitline, Spanish-language podcasts and videos on the *Tips*™ website), and ask follow-up questions at every visit. The provider would then follow up with the patient during the patient appointment to reinforce the messaging.



Results

During the 10-week implementation period, which occurred from April to June 2017, Molina Healthcare Clinic staff reported a remarkable 500% increase in cessation conversations in April compared to the baseline data rates. A 420% increase in cessation conversations occurred in the entire month of May compared to the baseline data. Finally, a 460% increase in cessation conversations occurred in June compared to the baseline data. Prior to the implementation of the *Tips™* campaign strategy, Molina Healthcare Clinic staff rarely asked about patients' tobacco use. Following the intervention, the staff reported putting forth more effort to provide tobacco cessation resources to patients and connect with them personally regarding their tobacco use.

The clinic staff reported a strong commitment to helping their Spanish-speaking, low-income patients quit using tobacco and believed the *Tips™* campaign would be an effective strategy, which was essential to the success of the campaign. One longtime smoker said she had tried to quit "so many times" but was unsuccessful in her attempts. The medical assistant used the support skills gained through the *Tips™* campaign training to initiate a conversation about the patient's tobacco use and the long- and short-term health effects, demonstrated the commitment of the clinic to supporting the patient, and provided several resources, including the QuitLine number, Spanish language *Tips™* campaign materials, and a free "quit kit." The medical assistant was empowered to help the patient, and the patient reported a renewed desire to quit smoking and direction for starting.

Insights

The *Tips™* campaign and training empowered clinic staff to hold cessation conversations by increasing their basic knowledge of tobacco use and providing accessible resources for hard-to-reach populations. One medical assistant noticed that some patients who were not ready to talk about quitting tobacco would pick up printed materials at the clinic. This indication of interest motivated her to follow up in later visits and provide resources. Gaining buy-in from all medical assistants was important to the success of this intervention. Molina Healthcare Clinic intends to continue implementing the *Tips™* campaign.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

Linnea Fletcher, MPH, MPA

Tobacco Prevention and Control Program Manager
Utah County Health Department
linneaf@utahcounty.gov

Sheree Keitt, MPH

Senior Program Analyst
NACCHO
skeitt@naccho.org

Melanie Ruhe, MPH

Program Analyst
NACCHO
mruhe@naccho.org

NACCHO

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1201 Eye St NW, Suite 400 Washington, DC 20005

P 202-783-5550 F 202-783-1583

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