

# EXTINGUISHING THE TOBACCO EPIDEMIC *in* OKLAHOMA

## THE PROBLEM

Cigarette smoking remains the leading cause of preventable death and disability in the United States, despite a significant decline in the number of people who smoke. Over 16 million Americans have at least one disease caused by smoking. This amounts to \$170 billion in direct medical costs that could be saved every year if we could prevent youth from starting to smoke and help every person who smokes to quit.



## OKLAHOMA KEY FACTS

**\$1.3M**

Was received from CDC for tobacco prevention and control activities in FY 2016

In 2015, **31.4%** of Oklahoma high school **youth** reported currently using **any tobacco product**, including e-cigarettes. Among Oklahoma high school **youth**, **13.1%** reported currently smoking **cigarettes**.

**22.2%**

Of adults smoked cigarettes in 2015

**7,500**

Adults die from smoking-related illnesses each year

**\$1.6B**

Was spent on healthcare costs due to smoking in 2009

## PUBLIC HEALTH RESPONSE TO TOBACCO USE IN OKLAHOMA

Oklahoma's tobacco prevention and control program is working to eliminate barriers to help smokers quit for good. Most smokers try a number of times to quit successfully, so eliminating barriers to quitting, such as copayments for treatment or limits on the number of quit attempts covered by insurance, are critical ways to help smokers quit. The Oklahoma tobacco control program identified that one-third of the state's Medicaid population smokes. Seeking to reduce this disparity, the state worked to integrate cessation treatments into routine care for Medicaid patients. The program focused on reducing barriers, such as removing preauthorization. Further, county health departments cooperated by screening all clients for tobacco use and directly referring them to the state's quitline. In less than six months after this integration intervention, utilization of the benefit increased by about 50%. The approach also identified copayments for tobacco cessation treatment as a major barrier for Medicaid smokers. After demonstrating that a change would have minimal fiscal impact on the state budget, the Oklahoma Health Care Authority eliminated copayments for FDA-approved cessation medications.

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OKLAHOMA



U.S. Department of  
Health and Human Services  
Centers for Disease  
Control and Prevention

[www.cdc.gov/tobacco](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco)

## CDC's ROLE IN ADVANCING STATE TOBACCO CONTROL PROGRAMS

Oklahoma is one of 50 states plus DC that receives funding and technical support from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to support comprehensive tobacco control efforts and quitlines. The Office on Smoking and Health (OSH) is the lead federal agency for comprehensive tobacco prevention and control. For decades, OSH has led public health efforts to prevent young people from using tobacco and to help all tobacco users to quit.

## CDC's TIPS FROM FORMER SMOKERS™ (Tips™) CAMPAIGN HELPS OKLAHOMA SMOKERS QUIT SMOKING



Despite significant progress, tobacco use remains the leading preventable cause of death and disease in the US. The good news is that 7 out of 10 smokers want to quit smoking. That is why since 2012 CDC has been educating the public about the consequences of smoking and exposure to secondhand smoke and encouraging smokers to quit through a federally funded, national tobacco education campaign, *Tips From Former Smokers*. The campaign features former smokers suffering from the real consequences of smoking.

The *Tips* campaign connects smokers with resources to help them quit, including a quitline number (1-800-QUIT-NOW) which routes callers to their state quitline. The Oklahoma quitline provides free cessation services, including counseling and medication. These services are effective in improving health outcomes and reducing healthcare costs.

*"I was thinking about relapsing today and the new commercials came on. It changed my mind real fast. You don't understand the power of these commercials until you have made the decision to quit. Terrie Hall makes me cry every time . . . that could easily be me."*

– Justin: January 2016

Incoming calls to the Oklahoma state quitline increased by an average **30%** during the 2016 *Tips* campaign. The Campaign generated a total of **26,993** calls to the Oklahoma state quitline from January 25<sup>th</sup> to June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

## OKLAHOMA TOBACCO PREVENTION & CONTROL PROGRAMS REDUCE HEALTHCARE COSTS

Tobacco prevention and control activities are a public health "best buy." Evidence-based, statewide tobacco control programs that are comprehensive, sustained, and accountable have been shown to reduce the number of people who smoke, as well as tobacco-related diseases and deaths. For every dollar spent on tobacco prevention, states can reduce tobacco-related health care expenditures and hospitalizations by up to \$55. The longer and more states invest, the larger the reductions in youth and adult smoking. A comprehensive statewide tobacco control program includes efforts to:



**1** Prevent initiation of tobacco use especially among youth and young adults



**2** Promote cessation and assist tobacco users to quit



**3** Protect people from secondhand smoke

For more information on tobacco prevention and control, visit [cdc.gov/tobacco](http://cdc.gov/tobacco).

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