



Public Health
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Idaho Public Health Districts

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September 2014

IDAHO HEALTH DISTRICTS' MILLENNIUM TOBACCO CESSATION PROGRAM

The tobacco use epidemic causes six million deaths worldwide each year and is the number one cause of sickness and death in the United States. However, medical research demonstrates clearly that the risk of heart attack, stroke, and various cancers decreases significantly in a person within one to five years of quitting smoking. Every year, more than 40% of smokers make an attempt to quit smoking, but more assistance is needed to ensure these attempts are successful in the long-term.

In fact, research has shown that individuals who participate in tobacco cessation interventions are significantly more likely to quit tobacco use and to remain smoke-free than those who do not receive tobacco cessation services.

Across national controlled evaluations of tobacco cessation programs, there was an average quit rate between 15% and 19% directly at the end of the program. In a separate analysis of controlled tobacco cessation interventions, there was a long-term abstinence rate of 12.5% of participants who reported being abstinent for at least 30 days. In both cases, the participants assigned to the tobacco cessation programs had significantly higher quit rates and abstinence rates than those who were in the control group (American Journal of Community Psychology, 2013:5).

To assist Idahoans in the process of quitting tobacco use, Idaho's local public health districts provide free tobacco cessation classes, funded through the Idaho Millennium Fund, to pregnant women, youth, and adults. These evidence-based classes consist of multiple sessions and contain educational counseling on nicotine addiction, consequences of tobacco use, benefits of being tobacco-free, combating withdrawal symptoms, stress management techniques, nutrition and exercise, social support, techniques for dealing with relapse, different quitting techniques, strategies for coping with urges, and promotion of Idaho's Quitline (1-800-QUIT-NOW) and quitnow.net, and other Idaho resources.

For each \$1 spent on tobacco cessation services and outreach, there is an associated \$3.12 savings in Medicaid expenses.

Decreasing youth tobacco use is essential in preventing serious complications and more severe tobacco addictions later on in life. That is why Idaho's seven local public health districts also target youth for tobacco cessation services. It is notable that interventions customized for youth tobacco cessation that produce positive results are typically ones that target the issues of why youth started smoking in the first place. These programs address topics such as depression, stress, conflict, communication skills, and goal setting.

Not only does tobacco cessation help improve quality of life, it is also a cost effective investment. For example, savings in Medicaid programs are attributable to decreased hospitalizations for cardiovascular conditions. In a recent study a cost-benefit analysis computed an estimated net savings of \$388 annually per smoker on Medicaid. The analysis concluded that for each \$1 spent on tobacco cessation services and outreach, there is an associated \$3.12 savings in Medicaid expenses. In addition, the financial benefit to employers who offer coverage for tobacco cessation programs is estimated to be \$3,400 per year. This is a result of an increase in productivity, fewer absences, and reduced cases of illness.



For additional information about tobacco cessation classes in your area, contact your local public health district (<http://www.healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/Health/HealthDistricts/tabid/97/Default.aspx>).

HEALTHY PEOPLE IN HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

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