

Tobacco-Free QC Coalition

Year in Review | FY2013

Welcome to the Tobacco-Free QC Coalition (TFQC)

The TFQC is a bi-state coalition formed out of a visionary effort to unite many local resources to reduce the impact of tobacco and improve the health of the Quad City community. Since the initial meeting of the TFQC in September 1998, the Coalition has grown to include representatives from health care, local public agencies, schools, and other people in the community dedicated to reducing the impact of tobacco. During this year, we welcomed Chris Pekios as the Coalition Chair. Ms. Pekios has been with the group since 2007 and is a Registered Respiratory Therapist and Certified Tobacco Treatment Specialist at Genesis Pulmonary Rehab. With help from many community partners, the TFQC continues its commitment to bring about change by focusing its efforts in a variety of areas that relate to tobacco

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We all know that tobacco is the leading cause of preventable illness and death in the United States. Smoking harms nearly every organ of the body, causing many diseases and affecting the health of smokers in general. Quitting smoking has immediate, as well as long-term, benefits for you and your loved ones.

The Tobacco-Free QC Coalition now has a Facebook page. You can stay connected and receive current information and discussions about tobacco issues and news by liking us at this link:

www.facebook.com/tobaccofreeqc

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Tobacco-Free QC Coalition meetings are held quarterly, beginning in February, on the third Tuesday of the month at 8:00 a.m.

To join us or to learn more, please call the TFQC at (563) 326-8618



Progress Toward Smoke-Free Policies in Rock Island County



Smoke-free policies are slowly but surely making their way to Rock Island County. The Rock Island County Health Department has been working hard to promote these smoke-free policies as part of two grants it currently receives—the Illinois Tobacco-Free Communities (ITFC) grant and the We Choose Health (WCH) grant. In fiscal year 2013, the Rock Island County Forest Preserve adopted a partial smoke-free policy for all parks under its jurisdiction. The policies are set to be implemented next spring. Policies are being written (though yet to be officially approved) for the Greater Metro Housing Authority and the Moline Park District to limit smoking. The Health Department is actively engaging other park districts and housing authorities, as well as college campuses and apartment owners, to further the cause of protecting the public from the dangers and harms of second-hand smoke. Though sometimes getting organizations to develop and implement these policies can be slow, the policies themselves and their benefits will be long-lasting.

Facts About E-Cigarettes

E-cigarettes are advertised as a safer cigarette. But is it really true? Here is what we all need to know about e-cigarettes.

E-cigarettes (or electronic cigarettes) are battery-powered devices that provide doses of nicotine and other additives to the user through an aerosol atomizer.

The FDA has announced that it intends to expand its jurisdiction over tobacco products to include e-cigarettes, but has not yet issued regulatory rules. Because e-cigarettes are largely unregulated, there is no reliable information about them, such as the amounts and types of components and potentially harmful ingredients in them. Data shows a dramatic rise in usage of e-cigarettes by youth, and this is cause for great concern as we do not yet understand the long-term effects of these novel tobacco products. They contain various levels of addicting nicotine and because of their added fruit and candy flavors, they appeal to youth.

In closing, at this point, a ban on selling e-cigarettes to minors will be effective in Illinois beginning January 1st, but are not restricted or regulated by the Iowa or Illinois Smoke-Free Air Acts.



Tobacco and the Affordable Care Act

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) is designed to increase coverage for preventive care. Individuals on Medicare will get a prevention and wellness visit with their doctor. To those covered by Medicaid, the ACA adds coverage of tobacco cessation medications in all states. All plans purchased through the state health insurance exchanges are required to cover “Essential Health Benefits” which currently include tobacco cessation. New employer-sponsored insurance also will be required to provide preventive services, including tobacco cessation, though existing plans may be exempt if they are not changed in any way. These changes not only positively affect those whose existing policies may be updated to include tobacco cessation, but also those who are uninsured and will be eligible for affordable insurance through the ACA and those currently on Medicaid. Both groups are statistically more likely than the general population to be smokers, so the ACA will bring a much-needed service to these two groups.

Smoke-Free Homes Campaign 2013

In 2013, the TFQC developed a campaign to educate the Quad Cities community about the importance of eliminating smoke exposure in the home. The TFQC again partnered with the National CineMedia (NCM) to develop a 15 second “Keep Your Home Smoke-Free” animation. The animation was featured during all of the previews at the Rave Cinemas in Davenport for 6 weeks beginning in March of 2013. The purpose of the campaign was to encourage movie-goers to develop a smoke-free home pledge.



Legislation Helps to Improve Outcomes

When state lawmakers pushed to raise Iowa's cigarette tax by \$1 per pack in 2007, backers said that the increase would help reduce cigarette smoking in Iowa. Even as they raised the tax, they predicted that tax revenues eventually would drop as Iowans dropped the deadly tobacco habit.

Six years later, it appears they were accurate. According to the Iowa Department of Public Health Chronic Disease report, sixteen percent of Iowa adults smoke. That is a 4 percent drop from 2007.

After an initial jump in tobacco tax collections, revenues have dropped 9 percent between fiscal year 2007 and the current 2014 budget year. The \$226.8 million expected to flow in this year from tobacco taxes goes to the Healthy Iowa Trust Fund, where it helps cover the state's share of Medicaid costs.

Along with the state tax increase, and a federal tax boost, Iowa's 2008 Smokefree Air Act, which banned smoking in most indoor public places, is also a major factor in reducing the appeal of smoking. All in all, Iowa can be proud of the strides it has made in cutting smoking rates.

The message on the dangers of tobacco is clear and well-known after decades of warnings. Money aimed at helping Iowans afford cessation treatments and tools is well spent. The trend lines in Iowa are encouraging. The progress is unmistakable. Gradually, steadily, smoking is being snuffed out.



QUITLINE IOWA AND ILLINOIS

The Iowa and Illinois Quitlines are available free of charge for people wanting to quit tobacco.

The idea of the Quitline is unique because people can access cessation services as soon as they are ready to quit. In addition, when a person signs up for Quitline cessation services either by phone or online, they will qualify for free Nicotine Replacement Therapy to assist in their quit attempt.

The quit coach will assist an individual in developing an easy to follow quit plan to get ready, take action and to live the rest of their life without the use of tobacco.

Based on 25 years of research and experience, they teach people how to become experts in living without tobacco using "The 4 essential Practices to Quit for Life"

1. Quit at your own pace
2. Conquer your urges to smoke
3. Use medications so they really work.
4. Don't just quit, become a non-smoker

Interested in getting involved with the Tobacco-Free QC Coalition? Your time and talents can always be used! Please contact one of the Health Departments to find out how you can help to reduce the impact of tobacco in the Quad Cities.

Scott County Health Department
600 W. 4th Street, Davenport, IA 52801
Ph: (563) 326-8618
kim.mills@scottcountyiowa.com

Rock Island County Health Department
2112 25th Avenue, Rock Island, IL 61201
Ph: (309) 793-1955
losborne@co.rock-island.il.us



Visit our website at
www.tobaccofreeqc.com
The TFQC is an affiliate project of the Quad City Health Initiative



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