



Good Health Is Good Business

Employer-sponsored insurance coverage of smoking cessation could save employers and insurers money.



In 2000, the U.S. Public Health Service reported that employers can save money and reduce tobacco use by their employees by providing insurance coverage for smoking cessation.

The savings came from:

- decreased medical care costs
- decreased smoking-related productivity loss
- decreased absenteeism

“Employer-sponsored insurance coverage...,” Douglas E. Levy, PhD, 9/06, *American Jnl of Managed Care*, 553-562

What does insurance coverage for tobacco cessation cost? Would you believe only \$0.13 employee/month?

That is what the State of Wisconsin Department of Employee Trust Funds found when they introduced a health insurance benefit for pharmacotherapy. *American Jnl of Preventive Medicine*, 2007;32(2):139-142

What is pharmacotherapy?

Several interventions working together (counseling, nicotine replacement products, medication) improve a tobacco user’s ability to quit. Nicotine replacement products and other medications are called pharmacotherapy.

Insurance providers to Westmoreland County businesses tell us that a business has the option to select cessation services and/or pharmacotherapy as benefits for employees. Every business can check with their own insurance provider to see what tobacco cessation options they cover.

For help in reviewing your coverage and additional data on cost savings to employers who provide insurance coverage for cessation, call Amanda Iwinski, 724-837-1402.

Continuing education is available for health and child care administrators and staff.

Tobacco use is a leading causes of preventable death. Those already ill and children are especially vulnerable to exposure to tobacco smoke pollution. Programs on these topics, how to make effective referrals to free community cessation programs and new regulations regarding Clean Indoor Air are available. To schedule a program, contact Vickie Oles, 724-837-1402.

Q&A: Tips from Amanda

How can I help my employees quit using spit tobacco or quit smoking?



Sixteen employers in Westmoreland County have already offered free work-site “How to Quit” programs for employees through Penn State Extension. During each program, a number of employees successfully quit.

There are many ways you can encourage employees’ efforts:

- Arrange a *lunch and learn* about quitting
- Provide a Wellness Fair or display and include tobacco cessation information
- Offer work-site “How to Quit” programs
- Develop a tobacco-free business policy
- Post signs about upcoming cessation classes available at Excelsa Health sites
- Post signs or use pay inserts with the PA Free Quitline, 1-800-QUIT NOW (1-800-784-8669), and the website DeterminedToQuit.com

To arrange your FREE employee help, call Amanda Iwinski, Penn State Tobacco Dependence Treatment Specialist, 724-837-1402.

Newsletter is courtesy of Westmoreland Drug and Alcohol Commission, Inc., a member of Tobacco Free SWPA

Penn State Cooperative Extension
214 Donohoe Road, Suite E
Greensburg, PA 15601



The Pennsylvania State University is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to programs, facilities, admission, and employment without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications as determined by University policy or by state or federal authorities. It is the policy of the University to maintain an academic and work environment free of discrimination, including harassment. The Pennsylvania State University prohibits discrimination and harassment against any person because of age, ancestry, color, disability or handicap, national origin, race, religious creed, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status. Discrimination or harassment against faculty, staff, or students will not be tolerated at The Pennsylvania State University. Direct all inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policy to the Affirmative Action Director, The Pennsylvania State University, 328 Boucke Building, University Park, PA 16802-5901, Tel 814-865-4700/V, 814-863-1150/TTY.



There's a new Air about Pennsylvania

Smoke-Free is now the Law!

How is the law working for you?

Visit the **Pennsylvania Department of Health website at www.health.state.pa.us** and click on **Clean Indoor Air** for the law, forms, a toolkit, and answers to frequently asked questions.

Be Aware!

As smoking declines, tobacco companies have been known to push spit tobacco use in smoke-free zones. Cancers of the head and neck frequently involve the mouth and throat and are referred to as oral cancer. Yearly, 1,380 cases occur in Pennsylvania and about 350 Pennsylvanians die of this disease. The most common risk factors for development of oral cancer are tobacco (*cigarettes and spit tobacco*) and alcohol use.

Spit tobacco is not a safe alternative to cigarettes.