

EMPIRE CHALLENGE News

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2007 Great American Smokeout

Thursday, November 15th

Participate in this year's *Great American Smokeout* by promoting a healthier, fulfilling lifestyle free from tobacco.

Contact the Empire Challenge Initiative to order **FREE** cessation resources for your worksite:

- Posters
- Quitline referral cards for patients
- Medication guides for healthcare practitioners
- Self-help resources for your waiting room

Contact the Empire Challenge to order any of these, or a variety of additional free resources today:

Phone:

518-268-6165

Email:

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Empire Challenge Salutes the *Smokeout* Challenge

Traditionally taking place on the third Thursday of November, *The Great American Smokeout* is a day you can look forward to encouraging your patients who smoke to take a special challenge of their own; a day when you can motivate them to consider joining the *thousands* of other Americans who will pledge to quit smoking for a day.

This year's *Great American Smokeout* will happen on Thursday, November 15th. On this day smokers across the nation will commit to smoking less or quitting for the day; they will challenge themselves to stop using tobacco and raise awareness of the many effective ways to quit for good.

History of the Great American Smokeout

The idea for the Great American Smokeout first emerged from a 1974 event. Lynn R. Smith, editor of the *Monticello Times* in Minnesota, spearheaded the state's first *D-Day*, or "Don't Smoke Day". This idea may have been inspired by Arthur P. Mullaney of Randolph, Massachusetts, who, three years earlier, had asked people to give up cigarettes for a day and donate the money they would have spent on cigarettes to a high school scholarship fund.

The idea of no smoking for a day was quickly caught on by others, and, on November 18th, 1976, the California division of the American Cancer Society successfully challenged nearly one million smokers to quit on that day. That California event marked the first annual Smokeout, and beginning in 1977, the American Cancer Society made this event nationwide.

Livefree. Smokefree.

This year's *Great American Smokeout*

efforts will focus around the theme, "Quit. Win. Live." Sponsored by the American Cancer Society's *Great American Smokeout* in New York and New Jersey, the "Livefree. Smokefree." webpages are dedicated to providing a wealth of information on how to quit smoking for good; they're sponsoring a unique contest running on YouTube right now giving contestants the opportunity to win an iPhone, the new iPod Nano with video, or an iPod Shuffle; and they're sharing a variety of resources to teach everyone about the truth about smoking and cancer to live a healthier life.

For more information about the American Cancer Society's *Great American Smokeout*, log on to www.cancer.org; type in the text "Livefree.Smokefree." in the search field for details on this year's "Quit. Win. Live." campaign and contest.



Dental Patient's *Great American Smokeout* Coupon

FREE Smoking Cessation Resources and Telephone Counseling Sessions!

Redeem this coupon by calling toll-free **1-866-NY QUILTS** [1-866-697-8487] or log on to: www.nysmokefree.com

No purchase necessary. All quit-smoking services of the NYS Smokers' Quitline are available at no cost to residents of New York State.

Website Spotlight:

www.becomeanex.org

Learn to quit smoking. Live Free.
BECOME AN EX. ®

As a collaborative effort between the American Legacy Foundation and the Mayo Clinic, the 'Become an Ex' program is dedicated to helping smokers who are ready to quit. The *EX Quit Plan* is a comprehensive approach, one that comes at this addiction from all sides: the physical, the behavioral, the psychological and the spiritual.

EX offers a variety of tools that will help your patients with a quit attempt: a step-by-step online personalized quit plan, a free *EX Quit Plan* book that they can order and follow on their own, and a toll-free number that will connect them to state tobacco quit lines for free cessation information.

Join the hundreds who sign up to become proud Exs each day – log on to www.becomeanex.org as a first step in exploring a tobacco-free life.

① **What are the hours of operation for the NYS Smokers' Quitline?**

Live Quitline Specialist support is available on weekdays from 9:00 am to 9:00 pm, and on weekends from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm.

Some individuals call daily to listen to the "Tip of the Day", the Quitline's taped, motivational message.



NYS Smokers' Quitline: Dos, Don'ts, and FAQs

Congratulations for implementing the services of the New York State Smokers' Quitline in your practice.

For *thousands* of New Yorkers, one call to the Quitline is all it may take to save their lives; a single phone conversation with a dedicated Quitline Specialist has ignited the motivation and confidence in many tobacco users across New York State to take that next big step in their lives and make a quit-smoking attempt.

If the services of the Quitline have, for a long time been a part of your practice's referral network, or if you're just getting started in linking your patients who use tobacco to the Quitline, then check out the following guidelines to ensure that your patient referrals are successful.

When using the Fax-to-Quit program, Do:

- Print or write legibly on the referral form
- Complete all blank sections on the form whenever possible
- Refer patients as often as they request
- Advise patients that they can call the Quitline as often as needed
- Expect a faxed progress report sent back on the patient's tobacco use status

Do Not:

- Limit the number of patients your practice refers to the Quitline
- Refax *the same* form or information that was previously submitted [instead, complete a *new*, current form at the time of the referral]
- Do not "promise" patches or confirm nicotine replacement therapy [NRT] eligibility - this will be done by a Quitline Specialist

Here are the answers to a couple of your frequently asked questions regarding operations at the Quitline:

When a hygienist or dentist makes a patient referral to the Quitline, what actually happens after that?

As you may already be aware, you can refer a patient or client to the Quitline in a variety of ways: fax referral, online referral, or by directly giving the patient the Quitline's toll-free number to call.

If the patient is referred to the Quitline via fax or online, up to five attempts are made by a Quitline Specialist to reach the patient by phone. The Quitline Specialist will leave messages to return a call only if the patient has given permission to do so [as indicated on the referral form]. If there is no contact after five attempts, the patient is mailed a Quitline Quit Kit and a letter encouraging the patient to call the Quitline for assistance. Once phone contact *is* made, the Quitline assists the patient with appropriate Quitline services including coaching and screening for NRT eligibility.

How is the Quitline responding to the new medication choice [Chantix™] to help smokers quit?

Quitline Specialists are trained to assist callers with questions about all medications to help with quit-smoking attempts - NRT, Zyban® [Bupropion], and the newest FDA-approved medication, Chantix™ [Varenicline]. With the arrival of Chantix™, Quitline Specialists have received specific training from Pfizer representatives and from Dr. Martin Mahoney, Medical Consultant to the NYS Smokers' Quitline. Quitline Specialists will assist callers to make informed choices about stop-smoking medications and advise them to discuss matters further with their health care providers.

For more information on using the Fax-to-Quit referral program in your practice, log on to the Empire Challenge webpages at www.Quitsolutions.org today.



Visit the Empire Challenge on the web at: www.Quitsolutions.org



Contact the Empire Challenge Initiative to order a supply of the national Quitline referral cards for your patients who live outside of New York State

Education for You, Directed By You

...Where you write in to ask, and we gladly respond...

Q: *"...in our practice we almost always address tobacco with our patients...but what do you do when a patient is just not interested whatsoever in quitting?"*

A: If your patient makes him or herself crystal-clear in letting you know that he or she has no desire to quit smoking any time soon, no worries! First and foremost - *you* have not failed as a health care provider or smoking cessation "coach"; second of all, understand that quitting tobacco is a *huge* life change, and big changes like this are oftentimes difficult and can take quite a bit of time to think about before actually going through with them... Just remember - it's the 'spirit of gentle guidance' that works best when talking to your patients about their tobacco use. Not always just *what* you say, but *how* you say it may make all the difference in the world in making something ring true to your patients. And even for those *real* resistant patients who are all but ready to pick a fight when you ask them about their tobacco use status, you might try saying something like this: *"I completely understand that you're not ready to quit smoking at this time, and I promise that I won't argue or lecture you about it! I do, however, have one thing to give you, if you don't mind, that I think you may want to hang on to for a "just in case moment" that may sneak up on you in the future [hand the patient the plastic Quitline referral card]; feel free to tuck this card away in your wallet or at home in your nightstand, and know that it will be there waiting for you should you decide to contact the Quitline for free resources and quit-smoking counseling."* And then that's it- you can end the discussion right there. In this way you have done your job by addressing the issue very politely without pressuring the patient; you have "planted a seed" so to speak, all the while emphasizing personal choice and a sense of control on the part of the patient.

Q: *"I practice in both New York and New Jersey; are my patients who reside*

in New Jersey eligible for the counseling services and free resources from the Quitline also?"

A: For any patients who are *not* residents of New York State, you should refer them to the national Quitline number [toll-free] at **1-800-Quit Now** [784-8669]. This number is a single access point to the national Network of Tobacco Cessation Quitlines. Callers are automatically routed to a state-run quitline, if one exists in their area. If there is no state-run quitline where the caller resides, the caller is routed to the National Cancer Institute (NCI) quitline. **Contact the Empire Challenge to order some of the *national* Quitline referral cards for patients in your practice.**

Q: *"Though it's difficult to admit, I'm a dental assistant and I still smoke... After reading up a lot on that new pill [Chantix™], I am seriously considering giving that a try this time. Can you tell me approximately how much this will cost?"*

A: Well first off - thank you for your honesty, and congratulations for making the decision to quit smoking. Depending on the pharmaceutical retailer, the cost of Chantix™ ranges between \$100 and \$140 per month. Chantix™ is covered by many health insurance plans; for information on programs available to help with the cost of this medication, log on to the website www.pfizerhelpfulanswers.com

Tobacco dependence is a chronic disease that is very complex in nature. The Empire Challenge team is dedicated to providing you with practical, valuable information to make it easier for you to address tobacco dependence with your patients, and we want to hear from *you*. **Do you have any questions** about tobacco use, the quitting process, medications to help smokers quit, or dealing with difficult patients?

Do you have a story to share with your colleagues about your personal experience helping a patient quit?

Please email your questions, comments, or stories to the Empire Challenge at:

jspenburgh@setonhealth.org