



CDC Cuts Devastate State Quitlines & Efforts to Help Tobacco Users Quit, Leading to More Tobacco-Caused Disease & Death

PHOENIX, AZ, UNITED STATES, April 8, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Massive job cuts at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the elimination of CDC's Office on Smoking and Health (OSH) will dramatically reduce resources to help people quit smoking, leading to higher rates of tobacco use and costs to care for tobacco-caused chronic disease.

For 25 years, OSH directly helped millions of people quit smoking and prevented youth from starting through programs and state funding as part of the National and State Tobacco Control Program. OSH funding supported state quitlines to deliver the counseling and medications proven to help people stop smoking. Quitlines increase quitting success by two to three times compared to trying to quit without help.

The North American Quitline Consortium's Annual Survey of Quitlines found quitlines received more than 1.2 million direct calls and provided tobacco cessation counseling and medications to more than 500,000 people across the U.S. in the past two years. In addition to telephone services, tens of thousands more accessed their state quitline web and text messaging programs. Based on evaluation data submitted on the survey, NAQC estimates quitlines helped more than 175,000 people quit smoking in the same period.

The loss of OSH funding to states will be devastating to efforts to help tobacco users quit. OSH funding provides \$1 out of every \$7 spent on quitlines, according to data collected by the Consortium in their annual survey. In five states and two U.S. territories, CDC funds covered more than 75% of quitline costs. Another 18 states relied on the CDC for at least 25% of their funding. Some of these quitlines would likely stop working or have to significantly cut services without CDC funding, leaving people without access to effective treatments.

Real lives are at stake. There are countless examples of the role of quitlines in helping people quit smoking.

From a Colorado QuitLine participant: "I smoked a pack-and-a-half, two packs a day sometimes. The Quitline was there for me. They helped me get over the hump, to get over the cravings." Denise used the quitline to help her stop smoking and has been tobacco-free since 2020.

From a West Virginia Quitline participant: "I wouldn't have been able to quit smoking without this

program. I was given patches, access to useful tools on the website, and unlimited access to a coach. I feel so much better!" Candice, "tobacco-free since"2022.

Secretary Kennedy has repeatedly called for greater attention and focus on reducing chronic disease. He has been invited to appear in front of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions to discuss the agency restructuring.

Any effort to reduce chronic disease must include efforts to reduce tobacco use since smoking is a primary cause of serious chronic diseases like cancer, heart disease and COPD. Instead of reversing chronic disease, the loss of OSH and services that help people quit smoking will mean more tobacco-caused illness and premature death. To reduce chronic disease, programs and services that help people quit smoking should be strengthened, not weakened.

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