

# **Creating a Comprehensive Tobacco Strategy for Your Workplace**

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The new Smoke-free Ontario Act came into effect May 31, 2006. This new legislations provides an opportunity for workplaces to reassess their tobacco policies and consider a comprehensive workplace strategy.

# Why does smoking matter?

- \$17 billion cost to economy
- 42.7% of the total \$39.8 billion that substance abuse cost Canadians in 2002
- \$12.5 billion in indirect costs/productivity losses due to illness/premature death
- Each smoker costs their employer \$3396

# Who Smokes?

- 18.6% of Canadians smoke
- Almost half tried a quit attempt last year
- Most try to quit on their own
- Only 3-5% are successful going “cold turkey”
- 50% of quitters succeed after 6+ tries

# Employers want to...

- Improve employee health
- Increase productivity
- Reduce costs
- Enhance job satisfaction
- Provide an effective setting
- Maintain a better corporate image

# Workplace Policies & Smoking

Stats Can August 2007 study (2000-2006 data)

- 27% of smokers quit after a total ban smoking policy was implemented in the workplace vs. 13% of smoking workers who continued to have no restrictions
- Smokers who did not quit smoked fewer cigarettes per day post ban
- Confirms previous data about effectiveness of workplace restrictions

# Understand the Law

- The Smoke-free Ontario Act provides the minimum standard for workplace smoking policies in the province
- Employers are responsible for creating and maintaining a smoke-free environment for employees
- Local municipalities may have more restrictive by-laws that need to be considered when developing internal policies
- Workplaces have the freedom to develop more restrictive policies using provincial and municipal laws as a guideline

# Key Stakeholders

Representative	Perspective
Occupational Health	Employee advocate for cessation support, training considerations, identification of other workplace hazards associated with policy change.
Management	Goal and timeline setting. Determines budget.
Health & Safety Committee Representative	Considers issues with smoking and non-smoking employees including breach of policy, changes in work.
Building Management	Considers the structural changes like the dismantling of DSR's, signage issues, creation of outdoor smoking space if necessary.
Public Relations/Communications Representative	Creates a plan to notify all stakeholders of outdoor smoking space if necessary.
Union or Employee Representative	Considers employee complaints, anticipates issues, advocates for employees opinion, input on enforcement policies.
Human Resources	Plans policies, benefits, reprimands for breach of policy.
Security	Plans for enforcement issues.

# Assess Timeline

Develop a realistic timeline.

Consider time for:

- Messages
- Printing materials
- Distributing of materials
- Structural changes
- Phasing in the policy

# Advertise the Change

The communication plan is the key to anticipating opposition and preparing an effective response

- Notify all staff, visitors and customers
- Utilize bulletin boards, meeting agendas, printed materials, payroll inserts, posters and intranet/internet
- Offer incentives, contests and provide quit smoking support to improve buy-in

# Plan Support

Smoking policies prompt workers to reduce cigarette consumption or try to quit.

Consider:

- Benefit coverage for cessation medications including over-the-counter products
- Advertise EAP support
- Offer in-house presentations, groups or counseling
- Adopt the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario's Best Practice for Smoking Cessation in your Occupational Health Department

# Brief Intervention

- Also referred to as Minimal Contact Intervention
- Approach each smoker systematically
- Research shows it is effective
- Known as the “4 –A’s”

# Ask

- Ask employees if they smoke
- Take a “caring” approach
- Use the “Stages of Change” model to determine a client’s readiness to quit

# Stages of Change

Prochaska & DiClemente created the model

- Precontemplation
- Contemplation
- Preparation
- Action
- Maintenance
- Relapse



# Advise

- “Quitting smoking is the best thing you could do to improve your health”
- Take a caring approach. Do not badger the smoker to quit!

# Assist

“I can help you.”

- Referral to community resources
- Self help material
- Smokers' Helpline
- Referral to other healthcare provider

# Arrange

- Follow up or referral if client is willing

# Helping Smokers

- One quit attempt costs a smoker \$300 in nicotine patches
- Many smokers need more than one type of medication to effectively reduce cravings
- There are two prescription medications available that are used for smoking cessation – Zyban & Champix

# Nicotine Replacement Products

Available over the counter

- Nicotine gum
- Nicotine patch
- Nicotine Inhaler
- Nicotine Lozenge

Not always covered by benefit plans

# Barriers to Using NRT

- Previous experience in using the product
- Taste
- Misperception that nicotine is the “bad” part of cigarettes
- Fear
- Cost

# You can lead a horse to water...

- 75% of people would like to quit smoking – focus on your motivated smokers and monopolize on the successes
  - Advertise the success of employees who quit!
  - Provide incentives/draws & include non-smokers/former smokers to support the quitters

## For those who don't want to quit...

- Provide a safe area to smoke but advertise quit smoking support
- Ensure that any smoking shelter meets SFO regulations
- Make your policy clear and re-visit it regularly

# Meeting the Challenges

- BUY-IN
- Ensure smokers assist with policy development & the communication strategies
- Workplace readiness...you may need to compromise

## Seek Help

There are several places available that provide free information including:

- Waterloo Regional Health Department
- The Canadian Cancer Society
- Health Canada
- The Lung Association
- Smoker's Helpline

# Specialty Training

- TEACH – Training Enhancement in Applied Cessation Counseling & Health
- Ontario Tobacco Research Unit on-line training modules
- Tobacco Treatment Specialist Certification at the University of Massachusetts or the Mayo Clinic

The creation of a smoke-free policy for your workplace supports a healthier, happier, more productive workforce when strategically implemented.

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