

Addressing Tobacco Use Among Older Adults and Adults with Disabilities

Tobacco Use is the Leading Preventable Cause of Death

Tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of death in the United States. One in five deaths is attributed to smoking cigarettes, and it accounts for 1,000 deaths in Vermont every year. Smoking greatly increases the risk of serious chronic diseases. The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) estimate that smoking increases the risk of coronary heart disease and stroke by two to four times, while increasing the risk of lung cancer 25 times.¹



The good news is that over the past ten years, smoking rates have decreased. However, with the rise in flavored tobacco products such as e-cigarettes, addiction to nicotine remains a serious issue. Many adults struggle with quitting and need extra support to be successful. Case managers and home visiting programs can play an important role by asking about tobacco use and referring to clients to free quit resources through 802Quits.

3 Risk Behaviors, 4 Diseases

Tobacco use is one of three main risk factors for chronic disease. The 3-4-50 campaign is a way to understand its impact. 3-4-50 signifies 3 behaviors (tobacco use, no physical activity, poor diet) that lead to 4 chronic diseases (cancer, heart disease and stroke, type 2 diabetes, lung disease), resulting in more than 50 percent of all deaths in Vermont. Businesses and communities are encouraged to take action to create supportive workplaces and local policies including smoke-free campuses and safe sidewalks. For more information, toolkits and resources, visit healthvermont.gov/prevent/3-4-50.



¹ http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/health_effects/effects_cig_smoking/

Tobacco Use Among Vermonters with Disabilities

For many reasons, adults with disabilities are more likely to smoke cigarettes than adults without disabilities. Vermont data demonstrates several disparities in terms of tobacco use among adults with cognitive, mobility, and vision disabilities and the general population.² Among Vermonters reporting any disability, 36 percent currently smoke cigarettes compared to 18 percent among the general population. The data also shows that the majority of Vermonters with disabilities are trying to quit. There are an estimated 27,425 smokers with disabilities in Vermont.

Status	Any Disability	Cognitive Disability	Mobility Disability	Vision Disability	No Disability
Currently smoke cigarettes	36%	38%	37%	14%	18%
Smokers who attempted to quit in the past 12 months	52%	62%	53%	Data Not Available	50%

Data Source: BRFSS 2013 - 2014

Tobacco Use Among Older Vermonters

About 6 percent of adults over the age of 65 in Vermont use tobacco. Older adults are less likely to make a quit attempt, but they are more likely to be successful in a quit attempt. While providing services and support to seniors, sharing the encouraging news that there is a greater chance for quit success and for gaining health benefits can be motivating. Health benefits are gained by any person that quits smoking – regardless of their age.² For more information, refer to [How Quitting Tobacco Helps Your Body](#).³

What You Can Do: 802Quits

Evidence shows that access to comprehensive tobacco cessation programs, like Vermont’s 802Quits, can reduce smoking rates, diseases and cancers caused by smoking and premature death. Evidence also shows that using nicotine replacement therapy in conjunction with counselling greatly increases the chances of a successful quit.

802Quits is Vermont’s resource for anyone who is interested in learning more about the free coaching, other tools, and nicotine replacement gum, lozenges and patches available to any Vermonter. Individual counseling is available from providers. Support is also available through online resources and chats, a 24/7 quitline run by experienced coaches and local in-person group support with a Quit Partner who can help set goals and stay on track in a supportive environment.

You can help make a warm handoff or referral – go to www.802Quits.org or call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669). People can also call **TTY** 888-229-2182 to get started. Questions? Email tobaccovt@vermont.gov and the Health Department’s tobacco team will help.

² Cigarette Smoking Among the Elderly: Disease Consequences and the Benefits of Cessation by David M. Burns (2000)

³ http://today.duke.edu/sites/default/files/quit%20smoking%20body_800.jpg