



## Dickinson-Iron District Health Department

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For Immediate Release

### **Tobacco-free for the New Year**

Kingsford and Iron River, Michigan - The holiday season is here, and with it comes many traditions and new opportunities. Many people look to the New Year as a time to try something new, make positive changes, and support their loved ones in their efforts to make healthy decisions.

For tobacco users, the New Year can be a great time to quit smoking. Family and friends can help to support and motivate people in their efforts to quit. By making your home and car smoke-free, you can set a tobacco-free example and protect nonsmokers from the health harms caused by secondhand smoke exposure. Family gatherings present a chance for family elders to talk to kids about the dangers of tobacco use, including the use of e-cigarettes.

“Quitting tobacco can be challenging because nicotine is a highly addictive drug. The good news is that there are resources available to help, and the health benefits are immense” stated Kelly Rumpf, Health Educator.

According to the American Cancer Society, the benefits of quitting smoking are immediate. Within 20 minutes blood pressure drops, and within 24 hours a person’s chance of heart attack decreases. The benefits continue for years, including reduced risk of lung cancer, stroke, and heart disease.

Research shows that while quitting is difficult for most tobacco users, people who use tobacco can increase their success in quitting with help. Quitters are most successful when using a combination of therapies, including resources such as nicotine replacement, counseling, self-help materials, and a strong support network of family and friends.

The Michigan Tobacco Quitline is an evidence-based service that continues to provide free telephone coaching for the uninsured, pregnant women, residents enrolled in Medicaid and Medicare, veterans, cancer patients, and American Indians, and free nicotine replacement therapy to those who qualify. The Quitline provides services including materials, text messaging, and referral to all Michigan residents. New this year is an online, interactive coaching program option. The same program that is available on the phone can now be done online with the Quitline’s specially trained web coaches.

Providers can refer their patients and clients to the Quitline, and individual tobacco users can contact the Quitline directly at 1-800-784-8669, or enroll online at <https://michigan.quitlogix.org/>. Additional information, including a fax referral form for providers, is available at the website. Staff and providers in all health care settings can refer patients and clients to the Michigan Tobacco Quitline.

Tobacco use remains the single largest preventable cause of disease and premature death in Michigan, killing more than 16,200 residents each year. Each year, 4,400 Michigan kids become new, daily smokers. Thirty percent (30%) of cancer deaths in Michigan are attributable to cigarette smoking. 19.4% of Michigan adults smoke cigarettes, 10.5% of Michigan high school students smoke cigarettes, and another 14.8% of these kids use e-cigarettes. The CDC recommends that Michigan spend \$110 million on tobacco prevention and control programming. Michigan spends just \$1.6 million. In contrast, the tobacco industry spends an estimated \$320 million to market their products in Michigan each year.

"The holidays can be a stressful time, but smoking doesn't have to be a part of them," said Rumpf. "Calling the Michigan Tobacco Quitline now can help people make the holidays, and 2019, tobacco-free. Quitting tobacco today will lead to a lifetime of health benefits."

For more information, please contact Kelly Rumpf at the Dickinson-Iron District Health Department at 779-7234 or call the Michigan Tobacco Quitline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669).

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