

Partnerships Against Tobacco

by Amy C. Schmelzer, MS

Middlesex County's Partnerships for a Tobacco-Free New Jersey has been busy working with a number of organizations throughout Middlesex County in effort to expand outreach efforts throughout the surrounding communities. Community partners met on April 7th for a tobacco-steering committee meeting to discuss the development and improvement of existing linkages with surrounding organizations in Middlesex County. Recent research from the Tobacco Dependence Program about mentholated cigarettes, newer tobacco products, and REBEL school policy also appeared on the meeting's agenda. Here are some recent events, updates, and collaborations going on throughout Middlesex County:

Tobacco-Free Hospital Campuses

Implementing more stringent tobacco policies has been part of Middlesex County's primary focus. As of January 1, over 50% of all NJ hospitals have implemented a campus-wide tobacco-free policy change. The Tobacco-Free Hospital Campus Collaborative, headed by the American Cancer Society, is applauded by Partnerships for a Tobacco-Free NJ for their efforts in promoting a tobacco-free environment on hospital grounds. Raritan Bay Medical Center, a hospital system with two locations in Middlesex County, has recently implemented a tobacco-free hospital campus policy effective February 1 and has collaborated with the Tobacco Dependence Program as treatment providers for smoking staff and patients. Amy Schmelzer, Coordinator of Partnerships for a Tobacco-Free NJ

in Middlesex County, will be training staff and treatment providers at Raritan Bay Medical Center in effort to promote cessation support and resources for inpatient smokers. She will continue to work with the remaining hospital systems that have not yet passed a more stringent tobacco policy and offer resources to facilitate the process.

Collaboration and Education of Treatment Providers

The New Jersey Family Medicine Research Network (NJFMRN) is a collaborative effort among a number of medical organizations, including: the Department of Family Medicine at Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, the School of Osteopathic Medicine, New Jersey Medical School, the Cancer Institute of NJ, and the NJ Academy of Family Physicians. There are over 200 family physicians that are members of the NJFMRN. One of the goals of the research network is to encourage collaboration between members and improve the quality of evidence-based medical care provided to patients. Middlesex County's Partnerships for a Tobacco-Free NJ welcomes NJFMRN as one of its newest community partners and is providing resources to ensure that NJFMRN members are aware of the newest evidence-based treatments available to assist smoking patients in their attempt to quit. The Tobacco Dependence Clinic, QuitLine, and QuitNet will serve as a primary referral services to patients in Middlesex County. For more information on the NJFMRN, please visit: <http://www2.umdnj.edu/fmrchweb/index.htm>.

Outreach to Rutgers Students

Middlesex County's Partnerships for a Tobacco-Free NJ has been collaborating with Rutgers University to implement cessation information sessions at Rutgers University dormitories. Amanda Rozycki, an Ambassador of Middlesex County and social work graduate student intern at the Tobacco Dependence Program, has arranged over twenty programs serving Rutgers University students. Information about the dangers of tobacco use, Big Tobacco's marketing strategies, benefits of quitting, and resources within the community to help quit are among the bi-weekly residence program lecture series. Campus programs will be held on both New Brunswick and Piscataway campuses.

In addition, Amy Schmelzer has collaborated with Rutgers Ernest Mario College of Pharmacy. She was featured as a guest speaker during the 6th-year student "Reflection Week." Students were presented with information on the efforts of Big Tobacco to initiate and maintain addiction; importance of tobacco treatment and education; information regarding the pharmacotherapy available to smokers attempting to quit; and the role of the pharmacist in linking patients to evidence-based treatments including QuitLine, QuitNet, and QuitCenters as standard practice. The Pharmacy College has expressed interest in maintaining linkages with the Tobacco Dependence Program and will consider adding more components of tobacco education throughout the pharmacy curriculum.

Top Ten things An Intern Learns at the Tobacco Dependence Program-Clinic:

by Mala D. Deodhari, BA

10. There is no "Magic Pill"
9. Motivation is an important part of the Therapeutic Process... and even more important is knowing that this motivation comes from within the client.
8. Tobacco is the hardest addiction to overcome, because it's legal!
7. It is hard to accept that cigarettes are an addiction, especially for the person who is smoking.
6. Even when faced with the truth, a renal transplant patient may still smoke regardless of surgical complication – a testament to the power tobacco has over people.
5. Always explain in detail how to use an NRT... Claims that "the medicine didn't work" can often be attributed to improper use.
4. When it comes to choosing cigarettes or food, the food usually loses.
3. Smokers may be ambivalent about their addiction... the "trick" is to make them question and think through, "why they want to quit".
2. Empowerment, self awareness, and small goals make cessation tangible.
1. Normalize relapse!!!