

UMDNJ Tobacco Dependence Clinic Continues to be a Leader in the Treatment of Tobacco Use and Dependence

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The Tobacco Dependence Clinic at UMDNJ-School of Public Health is funded by the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services to provide specialist tobacco dependence treatment services to the local community and to provide consultation services to health professionals throughout the state. Since its inception in 2001, the Clinic has treated over 1,800 patients. The numbers continue to grow each year with 640 more patients being seen in 2004. We utilize a multi-disciplinary approach to treatment including professionals from medical fields (internal medicine and psychiatry), psychologists, clinical social workers, and other treatment specialists.

The Clinic continues to treat smokers who are in need of specialty treatment. A typical patient smokes over 20 cigarettes per day, has done so for more than 20 years, has attempted on average 7 previous quit attempts, and smokes within 30 minutes of waking. In addition, 56% of patients have symptoms caused by tobacco, half have had prior mental health treatment, and 30% have had prior treatment for other addictions. Protecting young people from the harms of tobacco smoke is a priority here in New Jersey, and nearly one-third of patients seen in the Clinic have children under the age of 19 at home. Patients receive a

comprehensive assessment and a tailored treatment plan including counseling and pharmacotherapy. Over 50% of patients attend weekly stop smoking group sessions, and over 80% use medications to assist them in quitting.

Five hundred forty-one new patients were seen in 2003 with 94% making an attempt to quit; 41% were abstinent at one-month follow-up and an additional 17% cut their consumption by at least half. One hundred twenty-five (25%) remained abstinent six months after their quit date. These rates assume that those not contacted for follow-up (37%) were still smoking. There are several challenges and goals for the Clinic in the upcoming years:

Increase access to treatment for underserved populations in the local New Jersey areas, including the Hispanic, African-American, and Asian communities. This will be accomplished through targeted outreach to these groups, and improving our bilingual services.

Improve our 4 week and 6 month follow-up rates. These have been difficult with recent budget cuts and staff shortages, but are critical in demonstrating the effectiveness of treatment.

Expand off-site treatment programs. We will be starting a new treatment group at a local major pharmaceutical company and are negotiating at another large healthcare organization.

Continue to examine aspects of our treatment strategies. We have seen that abstinence rates are better among those patients who have used combination medications and have continued on medications for longer than package labeling recommends.

Remain active in tobacco treatment research. The Clinic has been the site of several clinical trials including evaluating multiple patch therapy and nasal spray treatment of smokers with schizophrenia. We will be conducting a clinical trial examining the effectiveness of combination and long-term medication protocols among smokers with medical illness.

Expand our collaboration with local healthcare organizations. We have been actively involved with tobacco treatment efforts with Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital, and other local hospitals throughout New

Jersey. These activities have involved conducting Grand Rounds for providers, providing treatment services for employees, jointly conducting activities for the Great American Smoke Out, and developing hospital and office-based consultation services, including an electronic-medical-record based tobacco module. These activities will continue to grow in the upcoming years.

Market the Clinic more aggressively in the community. To date, we have seen referrals from healthcare providers and word-of-mouth as our primary referral sources. Due to very tight budget situations, we have not had the opportunity to develop an effective marketing plan. This will be a priority for this coming year.

The UMDNJ-Tobacco Dependence Clinic remains one of the state-of-the-art treatment centers in the nation. We will continue to improve and deliver our services to the smokers of New Jersey, as well as to the nation's tobacco treatment community.

