

# The Tobacco Dependence Clinic Reaches Out to the Community

Since its inception in January 2001, the Tobacco Dependence Clinic at UMDNJ-School of Public Health has seen more than 1,000 patients for an initial assessment. The numbers of patients seen each month at the clinic has steadily increased through the years the clinic has been open. While this trend is encouraging, we recognize that access to the clinic may be a barrier preventing some people from pursuing treatment for their tobacco dependence. To address this issue, the clinic has been expanding its services outside of the office to better reach certain populations. Currently the clinic is running Stop Smoking Groups for Rutgers University, the Job Corps and various major corporations in the New Brunswick area. Below is an overview of some of our work with these communities.

## Rutgers University

Donna Richardson, LCSW, CADC, Michael Steinberg, MD, Anitha Varughese, LCSW, and Olivia Wackowski, MPH, participated in the monthly meetings of Rutgers University's Tobacco Coalition during the 2002-2003 academic year. The Tobacco Coalition at Rutgers is chaired by Adrienne Coleman, MS, Department of Health Education at Rutgers. Inclusion of UMDNJ/SPH staff in the Coalition has resulted in increased collaboration between RU's Health Services and the Tobacco Dependence Program. One example of the collaborative efforts is the ongoing development of *Stop Smoking at Rutgers* groups staffed by the Clinic at on-campus locations. The first 6-week group was held at the Merle V. Adams Lounge in the Cook College Student Center. The second 6-week group was held in a basement lounge in Demarest Hall on the College Avenue campus. Patients in both groups completed the required assessment interview. Treatment plans were formulated and reviewed by Dr. Steinberg, an internist and alumnus of Rutgers College. When indicated by their treatment plan, students were provided the Nicoderm patch and/or the Nicorette gum, free

of charge. Students succeeding in the treatment groups took the statewide Quitcenter, Quitline and Quitnet information home to parents and friends. Follow-up data was collected at four weeks and six months after the quit dates. Groups are currently underway at the Recovery Housing on Cook College Campus. Lessons learned to date include the desirability of scheduling groups during the first six weeks of the semester and the ongoing struggle students face as they work to remain smoke-free in a highly social environment.

## The Corporate Community

*Work-based Stop Smoking Groups* provide convenience to employees and savings to employers. The clinic offered its first Stop Smoking Group to employees at The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation where Michael Steinberg, MD, and C. Brooke Lange, MA, LPC provided treatment. Michael Steinberg, MD, and Donna Richardson, LCSW, CADC have provided subsequent work-based groups to employees at Firmenich, Inc. in Plainsboro and at SBI/Ivy Mortgage Corporation in Branchburg. Firmenich, Inc. participated in the American Cancer Society's Worksite Tobacco Initiative to defray the cost of work-based treatment. Informational sessions offer contemplating workers an opportunity to meet clinic staff, ask questions and sign up for individual assessment appointments. Assessments are then completed at the workplace prior to the first group meeting. Treatment plans are formulated during the assessment and medications are then provided or prescribed. Groups are held weekly for six weeks at lunchtime. Support to stop and stay stopped quickly develops between coworkers. Carbon monoxide is measured in the context of the group to keep the group within its one-hour time frame. Follow-up occurs at four weeks and six months after the quit date. The clinic is currently in discussion with other major corporations regarding implementation of Stop Smoking Groups at their worksites. 

