

Ask-Advise-Connect: A Rural Michigan Success Story

Summary

In response to high rates of tobacco use in both Barry and Eaton counties in Michigan, The Barry-Eaton District Health Department (BEDHD) promoted tobacco cessation through use of the Ask-Advise-Connect (AAC) program in physician and dental offices. By connecting patients directly to the Quitline during their visits instead of simply providing information about the Quitline and hoping they enroll in the program at a later date, doctors and dentists, alike, found that more patients were actually utilizing services offered by the Quitline. By the end of the grant, approximately 250 patients accepted the connection to the Quitline and the majority of providers found AAC to be beneficial.

Challenge

According to the 2009 Michigan Behavioral Risk Factor Survey, smoking rates in both counties were significantly higher than the State of Michigan, rates have been increasing over the past ten years. The objectives of the program were: By September 30, 2015, develop and implement a plan to promote and provide information regarding provider reminder systems for cessation resources and offer stipend as an incentive to at least 5 providers in each county; increase rate of tobacco users who call the Michigan Tobacco Quitline by 10 callers/ 6 months in each county; increase awareness of tobacco cessation resources among those who are disparately affected by tobacco use as well as providers/agencies that serve target population. Barriers of program implementation included project staff changes, the Electronic Medical Records (EMR)/Electronic Health Records (EHR) capabilities of the Quitline, and reporting issues involving physician and dental partners. The capability of EMR/EHR referrals to the Quitline will help to reduce these barriers.

"One patient in particular came in for a visit, the moment she walked in she was just beaming and so excited, she wanted to say thank you to the girl who signed her up for the Quitline program. She had been smoke free for almost 2 weeks! This was something that she had wanted to do but couldn't find the courage by herself; she had lost her son 1 year ago and this was the push she needed to make being smoke free her reality."

- Donna Morse, MCDC Charlotte

Solution

BEDHD's project focus was to decrease the burden of tobacco-related illness/death among individuals in Barry/Eaton counties. This was done by increasing tobacco cessation awareness and establishing provider reminder systems to connect tobacco user patients to cessation services, as well as establishing a communications campaign. BEDHD came up with this solution based on results reported by Vidrine, et al. in Houston. They demonstrated that provider-initiated referral to the quitline (AAC) increased quitline contacts and enrollment compared with the traditional patient self-referral process. The Barry County Tobacco Reduction Coalition and Eaton County Substance Abuse Awareness Group were key players and helped bring the work plan to fruition.

Success Stories

<http://nccd.cdc.gov/nccdsuccessstories/>

Results

The AAC process has been officially established in 9 physician and dentist offices throughout Barry and Eaton counties. Since the start of the grant, about 1,000 patients have been educated about the Quitline during physician and dentist appointments and of these, about 250 accepted the connection to the Quitline. Keep in mind that it takes the average tobacco user 11 quit attempts to actually commit to quitting for good, so this number fares pretty well in comparison. Through a radio advertisement, a bus advertisement, web-accessible PowerPoints and small media (flyers, handouts, business cards) the Quitline and AAC have been successfully promoted throughout Barry and Eaton counties and beyond. The community has largely been supportive of tobacco cessation efforts and plans to continue to promote tobacco cessation widely.

Sustainable Success

The BEDHD Project Coordinator plans to stay in contact with the providers that received stipends and to offer any assistance that may be needed when connecting patients to the Quitline. In addition, both county's tobacco reduction coalitions are in the process of updating their strategic plans. Activities will largely focus on continued Quitline and provider reminder system promotion, reducing youth initiation of E-Cigarettes and tobacco within the community, and continued education in the community around the dangers of tobacco use, especially among pregnant women and teens. The BEDHD Project Coordinator will also stay in touch with state consultants within the tobacco and cancer sections of Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS).

Your Involvement is Key

There are many ways community members can get involved to promote tobacco cessation. The Barry County Tobacco Reduction Coalition in Barry County and the Eaton County Substance Abuse Advisory Group in Eaton County are always looking for new members passionate about reducing tobacco use. If you are looking for more general information about tobacco use, The Michigan Quitline, MDHHS, The CDC, Tobacco Free Michigan and Tobacco Free Kids are all great web resources. If you are looking for more information about tobacco use and cessation specific to your county, contact your local health department.

References

Vidrine J, Shete S, Li Y, et al. *The Ask-Advise-Connect Approach for Smokers in a Safety Net Healthcare System. Am J Prev Med* 2013;45:737-41.

Vidrine JI, Shete S, Cao Y, et al. *Ask-Advise-Connect. JAMA Intern Med* 2013;173:458-464.

This publication was supported in part by funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Cooperative Agreement U58DP003921. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the CDC.

Success Stories

<http://nccd.cdc.gov/nccdsuccessstories/>



Contact

Lauren Cibor, MA

Barry-Eaton District Health Department
1033 Healthcare Drive
Charlotte, MI 48813
517-541-2624 phone
<http://www.barryeatonhealth.org>



Barry-Eaton District
Health Department

Be Active • Be Safe • Be Healthy