

ELIMINATE TOBACCO USE

Despite significant declines in tobacco use in Texas over the last several decades, it continues to **claim the lives of 28,000 Texans** every year.

And it **costs the state \$8.85 billion annually** in direct medical costs. Yet, according to the latest statistics, **4.76 million Texas residents continue to smoke** or use other forms of tobacco. This is due, in part, to the fact that tobacco use is a relapsing-remitting condition that most often requires medical intervention to

address. Tobacco use is much more than an undesirable habit or unhealthy behavior. It is a disease that requires dedicated efforts across a range of domains – policy, education and clinical service delivery – to ensure successful prevention and treatment.

GOALS

To address this challenge statewide, David Lakey, M.D., UT System, and Ernest Hawk M.D., MD Anderson Cancer Center, created the Eliminate Tobacco Use Initiative with the aim of first tackling tobacco use within their respective institutions to effectively lead statewide and national tobacco control efforts. The collaborative consists of leadership from all 14 UT health and academic institutions, and works closely with numerous Texas tobacco control partners.

This initiative touches more than **221,000 students, 100,000 staff members and 199,000 individuals** covered under the UT System's Select plan.

ELIMINATE TOBACCO USE SUMMIT

The Initiative kicked off on Feb. 22, 2016, with the Eliminate Tobacco Use Summit. Leaders from each of the UT academic and health institutions, and key tobacco control partners convened to discuss tobacco policy, prevention education and cessation services for UT employees and their families, students, patients and the communities these institutions serve. Since the summit, institutions have leveraged resources across the system to improve strategies in three key areas: policy, prevention education and cessation.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO DATE

Workgroups

Individuals from each campus participated in workgroups organized around policy, prevention education and cessation. Quarterly workgroup calls allow colleagues to share best practices, establish collaborations, discuss trends and create recommendations for the UT System and other colleges and universities.

Site Visits

Our approach is to foster a tobacco-free culture of respect, caring and health. Site visits were conducted with each institution at the one-year mark. These visits revealed unique tobacco control strategies that are serving our local campuses well. Additionally, we see key elements emerging that may potentially benefit other UT System campuses.

IMPACT REPORT

A report will be released to describe the accomplishments and impact of the UT System Eliminate Tobacco Use Initiative in its first year. In December, we will release a report to describe the accomplishments and impact of

the UT System Eliminate Tobacco Use Initiative. In this report, we will highlight innovative strategies that can be shared among UT institutions to accelerate tobacco control efforts.

THE FUTURE

In 2017, UT System will be able to announce that all 14 academic and health science centers will have implemented tobacco-free policies.

We envision expanding the annual summit into a national forum where colleges and universities can discuss policy, prevention and cessation

strategies. In addition, MD Anderson Cancer Center's EndTobacco Program hopes to offer resources to other colleges and universities in the form of technical assistance, a resource website with implementation toolkits, lessons learned and best practices from all the institutions contributing to this project.

For more information or to obtain our one-year impact report, email Jennifer Cofer: jcofer@mdanderson.org.

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