

Local Veterans Help Local Veterans

Summary

Local veterans shared feedback and insights with Healthy Communities of the Capital Area (HCCA) in an effort to help spread the word about free resources that help people stop smoking and other tobacco use.

Challenge

According to the CDC, "cigarette smoking is higher among people currently serving in the military than among the civilian population." Among military veterans, 29.2% reported current tobacco use (within the past 30 days). While many veterans take advantage of VA benefits, others may not know where to go for support when they're ready to quit using tobacco products.

Intervention

HCCA partnered with Hart Consulting to attend focus groups with local veterans in the Capital Area. Some key learnings:

- Preference for support by veterans, for veterans
- Don't use the word "quit"
- Keep it short, simple and easy-to-read
- Make sure veterans know which services are free
- Share materials in places veterans go: the VA, veterans' group buildings like American Legion and VFW, auto parts stores, libraries, diners, food banks, etc.

Results

We were able to create and update two posters and double-sided rack cards based on ongoing veteran feedback. The blue poster is designed for veterans who take advantage of VA benefits and the yellow poster is designed for those who don't - the rack cards feature smaller versions of each poster.

We were also able to create materials designed to appeal to female veterans and a "coupon" for free nicotine replacement therapy through Maine QuitLink, based on requests from veterans and focus group feedback. We printed and distributed these materials around Kennebec County at sites veterans recommended and shared them with Somerset Public Health for distribution as well. Materials are posted at www.hccame.org for the community to access.



For More Information, Contact Us At:
Healthy Communities of the Capital Area
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(207) 588-5342
www.hccame.org



VA Maine Healthcare System - Togus
Call Cathy Burgess at (207) 623-8411
Free Support Group & Nicotine Replacement

Free - VA National Quitline
Call 1-855-QUIT-VET (1-855-784-8838)
Phone counseling for those who receive VA healthcare

Free - Veterans Stay Quit Coach App
Download from app store
• Create a plan
• Cope with cravings
• Receive support

Free - SmokeFree Vet Text Support
Text VET to 47848
• Daily text messages
• Advice
• Support

Free - You Can Quit 2 - Live Chat Support
Visit ycq2.org for coaching, resources, tips and encouragement

Thank you for your service

Pictured at right and below, materials created with input from veterans in Kennebec County



Maine QuitLink Phone Coaching
Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW. Speak to a trained quit coach.
Access free nicotine gum/patches/lozenges

Maine Quitlink Web Coach and Quit Community
Visit MaineQuitLink.com for web coach, quit tools, a community forum and more. Free nicotine gum/patch/lozenge.

QuitGuide Smart Phone/Mobile App
• Understand smoking patterns
• Track cravings
• Motivational messages

Quit Now Smart Phone/Mobile App
• Track achievements
• Track motivations
• Track health improvement
• Ex-smokers chat community

This Is Quitting Texting Program
Text MAINE to 88709. Free, confidential vaping quit support texting program. Available for teens and young adults.

Learn more at www.MaineQuitLink.com



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"Visually, I like the balance between the text and white space. It has numerous resources listed in a clear manner."
VETERAN FEEDBACK ON FINAL POSTER



Maine Center for Disease Control & Prevention
Department of Health and Human Services