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**DRAFT --- Veteran Service Organizations  
Final Report**

PREPARED FOR THE CENTER FOR TOBACCO INDEPENDENCE

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## Veterans and Tobacco Discovery Project

In March 2021, MaineHealth's Center for Tobacco Independence (CTI) enlisted Hart Consulting in a discovery project to understand more about tobacco use among veterans. The discovery project included three components: focus groups with veterans, key informant interviews with veteran service organizations, and a web scan of state and federal resources for veterans on tobacco use. The discovery project sought to understand a variety of topics: tobacco use, interest in stopping the use of tobacco, membership support for not allowing smoking in veteran social clubs, and advice on best ways to connect with veterans.

### How to Read this Report

This report shares the background on each of the components including the methods, participants, and timelines. It details the findings from each part of the discovery project and shares recommendations for follow-up. The report contains the following major sections:

- High-level summary of findings
- Focus Groups with Veterans
- Outreach to Veteran Service Organizations in Maine
- Veteran Service Organizations with Outreach Opportunities in Maine
- Web Scan and Review of Select State and National Programs

### Limitations

As with any study, the discovery project has limitations. The focus groups and key informant interviews are qualitative by design and may not be representative of all veterans or veteran service organizations in the state. Every effort was made to include veterans of different ages, race, ethnicity, service branch, sex, and parts of the state. The key informant interview participants were identified through a referral process from veteran service organization professionals. The outreach was extensive, and several people in prominent positions did not respond to email inquiries for participation. Additionally, the web scan is one of convenience and is not a comprehensive inventory of all materials and supports available to veterans. Despite the limitations, the project findings provide important insights into veterans' thoughts on tobacco in Maine.

## Veterans and Tobacco Discovery Project Key Findings

### **Tobacco Use is a Big Issue for Maine's Veterans**

US Census estimates from 2015 – 2019, show there are 103,772 veterans living in Maine, 9.5% of all people over the age of 18.<sup>1</sup> Nationally, 29.2% of veterans use tobacco products. When applying those rates to Maine, we estimate that there are more than 30,300 veterans who use tobacco in the state.

### **Tobacco Use was a Norm in the Military Service for Decades**

The veterans participating in the focus groups described many reasons why veterans smoke, such as to relieve stress and fill times of boredom. Several veterans described that they took up smoking in the military so they could take breaks and socialize with friends. Some older veterans shared that years ago they were given free cigarettes or at deeply discounted prices during their time of service and at the commissary (this practice has since stopped).

### **Veterans Receive Healthcare Services from Many Different Providers**

Healthcare services for veterans vary by eligibility requirements including type and duration of deployment, years of service, and branch of service. Many veterans receive healthcare at the VA Healthcare System in Maine, others use community primary care providers for their care. TRICARE is a common insurance plan that covers many retired and active duty service members and their families.

### **There are Many Different Tobacco Cessation Supports for Veterans from National, State, and Local Sources, Eligibility Differs**

A scan of other states and veteran resources online revealed that there are many supports for veterans for tobacco cessation, but they vary in design and eligibility. The VA and TRICARE offer counseling and free medications, but not all veterans have access to these services. Many veterans have private insurance and receive healthcare services outside of the VA. Various state programs require proof of residency, and some simply link to the publicly available veterans' services weblinks.

### **Most Described Veteran's Interest in Stopping Tobacco Use as Similar to the General Population – They Would Stop When they were Ready**

Maine veterans participating in interviews and focus groups shared that tobacco use is an issue among veterans. They said the older veterans were more likely to smoke cigarettes and younger veterans, although less likely to use tobacco at all, would vape or chew tobacco. They felt that veterans, like the public, would seek out resources to help stop using tobacco when they were ready to take that step.

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<sup>1</sup> [U.S. Census Bureau Quick Facts, 2015 – 2019 estimate.](#)

**Veterans Shared that Messages Tailored to Veterans Would Catch their Attention**

When asked what messages would resonate with veterans, the participants supported themes that showed the positive benefits of stopping tobacco use. They said the scare tactic – you smoke, you die – doesn't work, especially for those who put themselves in harm's way every day during their service. They would rather see more positive reasons to stop. In response to seeing posters and handouts geared toward veterans, the focus group participants reacted positively to the messages that included patriotic images, symbols, and veterans or active military. They pointed out that they were likely to click on a tab on a website that said "active military or veteran" to seek information.

**They Encouraged Placement of Messages in Places Veterans Frequent**

The participating veterans offered a list of places and placements for tobacco cessation messages. The common theme was to put resources in places that veterans frequent – medical offices, the VA, housing developments, VIP Automotive, hardware stores, corner stores, and local restaurants, etc. Some participants mentioned placements at job fairs, Hire a Vet events, and other veteran events.

**Veterans helping Veterans is Best Practice**

Throughout the interviews and focus groups one theme repeated – veterans helping veterans is best practice. Participating veterans preferred working with other veterans because of their shared experiences. They felt that they were more likely to listen to or seek advice from veterans on tobacco use.

**Smoking in Some Veteran Social Clubs Will Take Time to Change**

Social clubs that operated before 2014 in Maine have the option of polling their members to allow smoking indoors. There are some local veteran service organizations in the state that follow this process to allow smoking indoors. When asked if the clubs that allow smoking would be interested in receiving help to transition to non-smoking, most participants thought the opportunity is limited. Some participants thought that the clubs may eventually shift to banning indoor smoking as they need to recruit new members, such as women and younger veterans who don't like the smoke-filled meeting rooms.

**Maine-based, Statewide Veteran Service Organizations are Interested in Sharing Health Promotion Messages with their Veteran Lists**

The discovery project included interviews with more than 15 professionals either working in or volunteering for veteran service organizations in the state. The key finding from this outreach and interviews is that the organizations are happy to work with CTI and local partners on sharing tobacco cessation information through newsletters and email blasts. There may be some review and approvals needed, but they do share health promotion content. The full report contains a contact list of the individuals and agencies that are interested in connecting.

**Local Public Health Agencies have Many Opportunities to Work with Veterans and Their Families**

The local veteran service organizations, such as the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars, voiced interest in having speakers join them to share information about health messages. Volunteers run and manage the clubs and may be slow to respond, so finding a personal connection to a member can be very helpful. Other social clubs such as the Elks and Rotary have many military veteran members and are also interested in finding speakers for their meetings.

The veterans in the focus groups listed many places to place tobacco messages focused on the veteran audience – VIP Automotive, hardware stores, local eateries, local stores, public housing projects, health care setting, and places where people get benefits.



## Focus Groups with Veterans

### Background

In March 2021, MaineHealth's Center for Tobacco Independence enlisted Hart Consulting to conduct focus groups, key informant interviews, and outreach to veterans to understand their thoughts on a variety of topics: tobacco use, interest in stopping the use of tobacco, and advice on best ways to connect with veterans. This section shares the methods, participants, and findings from the groups.

### Moderator Guide

The consultants developed a structured moderator guide in partnership with CTI and its community partners from HCCA, Somerset Public Health, and Portland Public Health. The guide included questions to meet the goals of the project and allowed for prompts and follow-up questions. The key topics included:

- Understand the issues for veterans and tobacco use
- Veterans' interest in stopping tobacco use
- Key messages for helping veterans stop using tobacco
- Best places to put messages for veterans about supports for stopping tobacco use
- Specific feedback on materials developed by HCCA on tobacco cessation supports
- Advice on how to work with social clubs to eliminate indoor smoking

### Focus Group Recruitment

From March through August, Patricia Hart, Principal Evaluator of Hart Consulting, reached out to veteran service organizations across the state to ascertain interest in participating in a discussion group. The scheduling took far longer than originally anticipated due to COVID-19 indoor restrictions in the spring, many clubs were not meeting until late summer or fall. For the most part, the contact persons for the clubs are volunteers and were often difficult to reach. See Table 1.

The final focus group list covers a wide-ranging audience:

- Represented branches of service – Army, Marine, Coast Guard, National Guard, Navy, and Airforce
- Included a variety of veteran service organizations such as American Legions, American Veterans (AMVETS), Disabled American Veterans (DAV), and Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFWs); student groups; active military; and community networks
- Represented 14 of the 16 Maine counties, representatives from Washington and Aroostook Counties did not return emails or calls
- Participants were from all age groups, 5 were people of color, 1 self-reported indigenous member, several had physical disabilities

### Focus Group Discussions

Ten groups successfully participated in the structured focus group process. Of the ten:

- Five were held in-person
- Four via zoom online, and
- One was on the phone

Participants agreed to have the conversation recorded with the understanding that the recording would be destroyed once the report was completed, and no person's name would be shared with their responses. The discussions lasted approximately 30-40 minutes. The moderator provided stipends to many of the participants.

- The in-person groups were given \$250 donation to their service organization.
- The zoom participants from the National Guard, University of Augusta, and University of Southern Maine received \$50 as a thank you for participating.

**Table 1. Veterans and Tobacco Focus Groups – Composition, Attendance, Dates**

Club or Group	Description of Participants	Number of Participants	Date Held
Gardner Elks Club*	Civic Club – Veteran Members	9	05/05/21
National Guard	Active Members and Veterans	3	07/20/21
American Legion Women's Network*	Women Veterans - Statewide	45	08/07/21
University of Maine Augusta	Students and Staff Veterans	6	08/18/21
University of Southern Maine	Student Veterans	8	08/23/21
Cabin in the Woods*	Veterans in Supported Housing	3	08/25/21
New Gloucester AMVETS*	Veterans	6	08/25/21
Southern Maine Military Community Network	Veterans and People Who Work with Veterans in Southern Maine	7	09/01/21
Western Maine Military Community Network#	Veterans and People Who Work with Veterans in Lewiston Area	12	09/22/21
Disabled American Veterans*	Veterans from Hampden/Bangor and Boothbay Harbor	13	10/13/21

\*In-person, # on phone

## Tobacco Use Among Veterans is a Concerning Issue

The veterans explained that tobacco-use is a big problem among veterans, especially during their time of active service. Many service members use tobacco as a pastime to overcome boredom, to take a break from an assignment, or to share time with fellow service members. Participants described the past practice of the military to provide free and subsidized cigarettes to enlisted personnel. Participants noted that younger service members are less likely to use cigarettes. One active-duty participant described that he sees users of chew and vaping as frequently as users of cigarettes when he conducts health assessments. They talked about how tobacco use among active-duty service members is common. In comparison, those who are off duty or since retired, are more likely to have stopped using tobacco. Some participants shared that once they left the service, they could no longer afford to smoke and so they quit.

*"I think it's a big issue, but it's better than it was..."*

*"I know very few veterans that don't smoke."*

*"I think it's either all or nothing. Like they're either the people who smoke pretty consistently and are very adamant that that's just part of their lifestyle. Then there's others who either have quit and never touch cigarettes again, or those who have just have never smoked. With the currently serving population too, I think we're seeing a lot more that just don't smoke."*

*"We do our [health] assessments annually and more frequently, depending on, if there's a life change, a promotion, if they're mobilizing for deployment, we would see them more frequently. We will ask the question again, there's kind of an amorphous, effort to try to get a little bit more data on [tobacco] use in the guard of the currently serving members and the types of tobacco products. I am seeing a lot of, a lot is relative, but as much chew, and vaping as I am seeing cigarettes."*

*"Tobacco use was really prevalent on subs. Especially when they banned cigarettes. People would still sneak cigarettes in and smoke them anyway."*

*"I would say the younger veterans, a lot of them, dip chew, tobacco. That's the younger generation, tend to not smoke, but they will use tobacco products and some vaping."*

*"One of my favorite sayings was smoke them if you've got them. Infantry, you just take a break whenever you can. If it's a cigarette break, it's a cigarette break."*

*"When I flew, I was a naval air crewman for twenty years. We were allowed to smoke on our airplanes until the last few years I was in service. ... Most of the airplanes until the end of my career had ashtrays in them. When I came into the Air Force I didn't smoke, but after a few years I took up smoking because I was the only one who didn't get a break during the day. ... I figured I wanted to get a break."*

*"Believe it or not, my first few years in the army, the army used to supply us with cigarettes. I mean, they actually gave them to us. You couldn't, pick your brand or anything, but there was always somebody around you could trade with. So everybody was already trading with each other to get the brand they wanted. ...I mean, I've been smoking, you know, 45 years now."*

*"The dipping is huge in the marine corps."*

*"In the army from what I saw, there was a ton of people who dipped instead of smoked."*

*"It's easier to dip as well. You can do it more places."*

#### **Is vaping prevalent among veterans?**

*"I saw vaping a lot with the Marines. One of the things that the Marine Corps did was they considered vaping, smoking, as far as the procedure of it. If you're going to vape, you need to go to a designated smoke area, not do it in doors, et cetera, et cetera. I'd always be catching Marines, vaping inside, whether it's ignorance to the regulation, which might've, might've been okay the first month or so it came out. But other than that, I think they just try and bypass that and get away with it. I would see quite a few Marines vaping in their cars, so I don't know if they're using that as a substitute or if they were never involved with any of that and then just got into vaping, but it's definitely there."*

*"I have a couple friends, I've got a few, 5-10 that at least vape they aren't veterans though, just individuals."*

*"I mean, not as prevalent as it was when the vaping thing first started, it was kind of advertised as a safe alternative to smoking and a lot of people that I knew used the vaping thing to try to quit smoking. And now when it comes out that it may not be safer. A lot of those people were that I knew were vaping went back to smoking."*

## Veteran Tobacco Users Tend to be Older Men and Those Experiencing Stress

The participating veterans reported that the tobacco users tend to be the older veterans and that younger veterans tend to be more aware of the health risks of using tobacco. The Vietnam veterans were often named as most likely to use tobacco, but the post 9-11 veterans were more likely to vape. They thought that men were more likely to use tobacco than women. The veterans and guardsmen with hands on jobs were more likely to be seen smoking. Several described taking up tobacco use when their enlisted peers were using, to strike up conversation or to cope with job stress. The younger veterans who smoke sometimes hide it from others.

*"I think it depends on the age too. If you are talking to a veteran that's 50 or older, they're probably more likely to be smoking than a veteran who's in their thirties."*

*"Men. High stress environment. Vets older when they [cigarettes] were issued."*

*"PTSD, substance abuse, peer pressure (younger vets)."*

*"I think the post 9/11 is more vaping."*

*"I would say all of them are high risk. It doesn't matter the branch or MOS. I think we are all highly susceptible. ... I've definitely seen a lot more males than females. I've never seen a female chew until I was in the military. ... But as far as age I see no difference."*

*"Even the chew, was something you can bring into Africa and other places. It was small and easy to carry."*

*"...Once I had joined the Navy, first time I tried, smokeless tobacco was in school, in class. All the other students, some of the guys had grown up doing it. And then other ones kind of just jumped on board. The peer pressure wasn't that they were crushing me, but you know, you wanted to be like your friends"*

*"I think when we get some out to some of the maintenance shops and potentially like the aircraft mechanics, I think it's more prevalent. I know usually whenever I go to the Augusta armory and they have the maintenance company there, there's usually a lot more folks out back smoking than say I've ever seen at Camp Chamberlain."*

*"I feel like with a lot of 30 and under, it's almost like a dirty little secret, like nobody wants anybody else to know that they smoke... Like you don't see them at the smoking areas."*

*"I didn't start to smoke until people started shooting at me."*

## Some Veterans May be Interested in Quitting Tobacco

Participants felt that there is interest among veterans in stopping the use of tobacco. The veterans agreed that when someone wants to quit, they will quit. They felt that messages, promotions, and ads were not going to change someone's mind, but were helpful when someone was ready to quit. One participant described the military deployment as fraught with danger. Thus, being told that tobacco use could kill you decades later did not resonate with service members who were already risking their lives. Several participants described that military people are stubborn and do not like to be told what to do by others. Participants mentioned that veterans and service members are not quitters – so phrases that include the word quit should be avoided. Several of the respondents shared that some veterans stop using tobacco to save money and that tobacco use is an expensive habit that could keep veterans from reaching their goals.

*"It depends on the particular person. Generally, you have to decide yourself to seek help. Not very. Pretty stubborn in their habits."*

*"As a smoker. I am not receptive of suggestions. If I want to quit, I'm going to quit. ... It's just a comfort thing that gets into your headset. Just use it as a tool. Yeah, it's going to kill me or ruin my lungs, but it's one of the vices I have and I really don't care."*

*"I think a bigger problem is military is more of a high-risk work environment. So, ads encouraging not smoking and all that is out of touch with that. It misses the fact that we are already taking high risk and there is less risk seen in smoking and tobacco. It's kind of one of those things where we are already at risk of dying from being shot or killed. ... So, if you weigh [the risks of deployment to a warzone], [with] I'm going to die at 60 or 70, who cares?"*

*"It's funny because it's the younger generation...then it's, those are the ones that I do see actively trying to quit. And I don't know if it's a combination of finances. I really don't know the reasons behind ...lots of the young guys in the Marine Corps may not necessarily have a lot of money and then just take a good portion of their paycheck to spend it on tobacco. Then have the repercussions of that. Not necessarily having their haircuts on time or just other small things that come into play when you peel the onion back as a leader and you're asking, well, how come you don't have this how come you don't like that? Then, you know, I don't have any money, but then you see logs of Copenhagen in their room and it's, well, you've placed your priorities in other places."*

*"I just had three veterans come to me today and request assistance with quitting smoking before Christmas."*

## Veterans Face the Same Challenges as Everyone Else in Quitting Tobacco

Veterans face the same challenges as anyone else trying to quit tobacco – withdrawal, boredom, stress, weight gain. Some said that for those on service weekends, the uniform is associated with smoking or chew and that is the only time they use tobacco. A few mentioned the need to keep hands busy to break the habit of reaching for a cigarette. Mental health and PTSD were raised as challenges in quitting tobacco, saying it has a calming effect.

*“The same thing that everybody else does, which is keeping your hands busy. When I quit smoking, it was habitual. As soon as I get in the car, I went out and if it was a longer trip, I'd like to work and then I would take a break every hour and go smoke. And on the way home I'd smoke. And then it's more or less just occupying the time with something else that will help you quit.”*

*“Some service members were telling me, yeah, I only smoke when I'm on drill weekend.”*

*“For some people, like they may associate putting on a uniform with smoking, they may associate with Dunkin donuts, et cetera. I think just kind of trying to break that association...I know when I was deployed, a big thing was a lot of people who didn't smoke, picked it up while they're on deployment or they pick it up while they're away at training because there's a lot of downtime. And it just goes back to that boredom factor, when people have too much time on their hands, they tend to say why not?”*

*“I think tobacco is a habit. In the military it becomes part of your routine. ... It's very calming. So especially if there's mental illness involved.. there's a comfort zone and you take that away. That's often very hard to break.”*

*“Nicotine is addictive. Friends who smoke. Weight gain.*

*“They may want to stop smoking, but because of living conditions, they might not because that's the only vice they have left. They might be confined to their home or their chairs and they don't really have much of a life.”*

*“Certain medications cannot be used by actively serving military due to [the] med being qualified as psychotropic...They no longer offer Chantix.”*

*“I think especially with Vietnam era veterans is more addicted and the younger veterans today, you're seeing a lot more people being recognized with PTSD and mental health issues. And those are contributing factors, I think. But other than that, the veterans are the same as a civilian.”*

## Veterans See Tobacco Cessation Messaging in a Variety of Places

Participants listed many places where they see messages about quitting tobacco – healthcare setting, the VA, television, social media, on the internet. They repeated that the messages don't motivate people to quit but are helpful to know where to get help when it is needed. Some thought the "scare tactic" ads are effective, others said the ones about family are more effective "quit for your kids". Participants noted they were seeing/hearing less ads for tobacco cessation in comparison to prior years. They did mention that the ads they now see were focused on stopping vaping. Some were familiar with the QuitLink, many were not.

*"TV. Veterans' office, vaping ads about metals. Any ads with negative effects are the better ones. It is an addiction."*

*"Yes, public service announcements, medical facilities, magazines. [They think the ads are] not effective."*

*"I think probably having small children would be an incentive."*

*"Mostly TV or internet ad. I've seen it on posters around school and the VA as well."*

*"They don't [make me] want to stop me from quitting."*

*"Yes, I have... You'll see them on buses and things like that. You see a lot of ads, well you did, not so much anymore, that promoted to switch to vaping, but now there's a lot of anti vaping ads that you see. I actually think I see more anti vaping than anti-smoking nowadays."*

*"I'm going to be honest and say, I haven't seen any in a very long time. That could just be media that I follow. The most recent thing I think I saw was the very nineties video about talking to your kids about vaping that looks like a saved by the bell from the early nineties video. Um, but I personally, I don't listen really to a lot of radio and I don't watch TV, so I don't really see any ads on those platforms."*

*"I can't remember the last time I've seen or heard an ad for quitting smoking. I only watch a few stations on TV and they're specialty channels."*

*"I think that have a veterans tab that have veterans on it, that talk about their success stories, that talk about what their motivations were."*



## There are Many Quitting Messages that Might Resonate with Veterans

When asked about messaging that would resonate with veterans, respondents provided a great deal of input. They brought up the “quit for your family” messaging that had helped them stop using tobacco. They described the isolation and sadness that smokers experience – not only smoking outside in the winter, but not wanting to suffer the disdain of non-smokers. They discussed using health messages that point out the adverse health impacts of tobacco use – some said these are powerful messages, others said they don’t work. Many veterans faced life and death situations daily in the service, they would not be swayed by long term health impacts. Other participants recommended creating ads that weave in the stages of change to help people decide to quit and the stages of quitting to let them know what to expect. Non-judgmental supportive messaging were also important. Using the reducing exposure to secondhand smoke arguments may not be successful and may stoke divisiveness. The increase in the numbers of people who are now smoking marijuana in public confuse the dangers of the secondhand smoke argument. Discussing costs, like fear and secondhand smoke, can work for some and not for others. A carton of cigarettes costs \$80 in Maine, adding up quickly for those who smoke frequently.

### Quit for your kids

*“Kids being disappointed in their parents stabs me in the heart every time. Cause it happened to me. My five-year-old was going to school his first day of school and I was recently divorced and I was sitting out on my front steps every night, smoking cigars and just tossed them in the driveway. And when he came to be picked up on the bus at my house, he saw all the [cigar] butts and he started crying. He goes, are you smoking daddy? And I said, yeah, I am. And he ran all the way around the house to the other side of the house, just had to cry and my ex-wife went to get him and it was my daddy's going to die. He's smoking. ... That's why I quit for a long time. Then I picked it up again due to other stress after he was full grown.”*

*“If they don’t want to quit, they’re not going to be very receptive to any message from anybody. It really has to start with that desire. For most of us, some sort of life-changing incident, like maybe having a child or grandchild or something like that might inspire to quit and not wanting to smoke around.”*

*They have to want to quit. Family and effects of secondhand smoke for children. Cost, young children.*

*“As a long-term smoker, it also has health effects on your family. My wife gets mad about like the coating of nicotine on the walls it messes up the house. I have a couple of young grandchildren if they are here or if anybody here is at the house, that's a non-smoker I go outside. I think in general, just to help your family.”*

**Effects on family relationships**

*"They do say like the fear-based stuff doesn't it might stop behavior, but it doesn't change it necessarily. So I think more of those intimate relationship things. I, again, could use maybe an indirect thing in terms of my sister, there's just two siblings in my family, me and my sister, and she's been a smoker for many years. I love her to death and it is a disappointment that she smokes and over the years it's kind of increased, not her tobacco intake per se, but her ways and means of trying to cover it up. And it's kind of like, it feels there's a certain sadness about it."*

**Isolation and the environment**

*"I think if you focus on the isolation factor. The being outside in the sub-zero temperature while everybody's inside at the Christmas party. ... Maybe the health factor because everyone is into like fitness and nutrition and everything right now, but trying to piece out how that fits in their overall lifestyle. The other thing that seems to be popular is the effects on the environment potentially. Cause it seems like the younger generation is a lot more cautious about the environment. Like what happens to cigarette butts. ... Do they disintegrate? What's the impact on the soil? ... It's a roundabout way of things, but that seems to be what people I communicate with [talk about]."*

**Use the stages of change theory in marketing materials**

*"You know it makes me think about the stages of change. You might be able to kind of leverage that a little in some of the marketing materials. ... So people in a simplistic way could maybe identify where they are [coming from], their thought patterns."*

*"I think the big thing is, nobody is going to quit unless they really want to quit. So there has to be enough evidence given on why they want to quit. Personally, unfortunately, I have been smoking for so long that I can't picture myself not smoking. I am having a couple health issues right now and I know I have to. ...I've been researching and I was going to talk to my doctor, what should I do? What resources are available and how should I approach this? So, so I think, that's something along those lines on how do you start to quit? This is what you should do in week one. This is what you should do in week four. Here are some techniques to keep you from going back two months later .."*

*"I'm a smoker, unfortunately, and that's a tough thing for me. Like to me, like everything they've got out there to put smoke in, as far as I'm concerned is kind of like a farce because it's all in your own mind. The only way you can truly want to quit, you gotta really want to quit smoking to do it. If you even have second thoughts about it, you won't quit. No matter what you do. You can go to all the counseling and all the groups, you know, chew all the gum you want and it's not going to make no difference if you don't truly want to quit."*

**Use respect and non-judgement**

*"I think just consistency, support consistency and facts. ... I just think a lot of how you approach anybody, whether it be a veteran, or a doctor, or a homeless person, with respect and non-judgement."*

**Testimonial from veterans, create supportive community**

*"I wonder if having a testimonial from veterans who have quit just a sort of an example of somebody who can and did tell their story might help. Sometimes that helps people relate and get inspired."*

*"Maybe a SA [smoking anonymous] meetings, telling our story and spreading the word and getting support from others."*

*"I think the approach is very important. Veterans don't like being told what to do. So if it's more of a, Hey, we can help you if you want it. It's definitely here for you, kind of approach. It's going to be way more beneficial than you need to quit smoking. ... Veterans aren't going to really respond that well to that."*

**Fear doesn't work**

*"The smoking ads are so much cooler than the nonsmoking ads. You look at all the old smoking ads, the women and the Marlborough man. There are no cool ads for not smoking. They all just threaten you with death. Like cool, I've been threatened with that in the military. So that doesn't make me fear anything. Trying to instill fear in my mind makes me want to fight back. Whereas you've got the cool smoking ads and why not. They are not trying to fight me on anything, or push me, or are right in my face."*

*"I would think that making it less cliché would be more of a help. You always get the you can quit kind of message. And its like yeah I can but you are not giving me a reason why I should quit."*

*"It's all about punishing smokers and not rewarding non smokers. If there was more reward towards not smoking in the military and regular life then people would chose not to smoke more. There is no reward to not smoking, other than your health, but we've already discussed that doesn't weigh on the balance."*

**Focus on being healthy**

*"If you want to go the health route, making veterans healthier in general. So like weight loss, healthier diet, exercise stuff like that. Then trying to correct some of them towards quitting smoking, is a better route than just saying, quit smoking for your health. Trying to lead them to a healthier lifestyle over all would be a better focus than just stop smoking."*

*"In doing that and guiding them with other health issues, then its not like I'm being forced to quit smoking. It's like my own idea."*

*"Speaking of alcohol. A lot of people that smoke also drink in excess. I think that may be another issue to focus on as well as opposed to just the smoking part."*

**Fear based approaches may work if you focus on the health outcomes for younger veterans**

*"I would guess fear. Look at the repercussions or the possible repercussions. Where a majority out of a group of people, the statistics out of a group of people smokers, this has happened, whatever the case may be. But what I have noticed too if you try and use that fear route even for myself, a lot of people [think] I'm not going to be that statistic I'll be that other 17% remaining or that other 50% remaining, whatever the case is, but I really don't know what would be effective aside a fear tactic, to be honest."*

*"Going back to what he was saying about a lot of the newer and young generation coming in, who do use, you know, you see them trying to quit. And I think that with the fear tactic with them, get them while they're young, before they established themselves with years of use and it's that much harder."*

**Find healthy activities to keep busy – work, exercise, etc**

*"Get them active and doing things. Have a van bring people from Togus to activities. Have something structured."*

*"Need to a plan to help you quit. What do they do with the downtime."*

*"Get them working."*

*"It's the support that you get when you go into the class out there [VA togus]. Everyone is working together to quit."*

*"You know what they don't make anymore? And it helped me. Was those Styrofoam cigarettes. I used to just hold them in my hand. I would chew them. ... It was very, very successful for me because I had something like that."*

**Dangers of secondhand smoke is not a compelling reason to quit, marijuana legalization has increased number of people smoking outside**

*"I think it's more those people that complain about secondhand smoke, complain about everything."*

*"I think in Maine, we've done a really good job. I feel like it's regressing a little bit, and it could also be the fact that I've been 2020 or outside without a mask on. So you couldn't smoke really anywhere anyways. I think like it's become very much socially unacceptable to smoke a lot places. You can't smoke in bars, you can't smoke in restaurants, you can't smoke in public settings. Most streets, like most people aren't smoking cause they want to be respectful of other people around them. Most people, I'm not going to say everybody, but most places, I think the rise of the public ability to smoke marijuana everywhere. I think those two are getting kinda conflated together."*

*"For years now its kind of put people in camps. You kind of have certain groups going out to smoke. The other groups are so mad. Like I've heard, they will say look at all the breaks they get, they get to go outside and smoke. Cause they're smokers. And then on the reverse, look at these teetotallers, they always have to have something to complain about. The thing I don't like about it is the divisiveness about it. Some people feel really strongly about it."*

**Quitting saves money – might not work for everyone, but cigarettes are expensive**

*"People who smoke don't care. Just keep raising the price they'll keep paying it."*

*"As we know how addictive nicotine is, price becomes a bit of a non-issue, even though it does have some impact, I wish there were more of a leverage in that regard that it made, you know, more of an impact where more people were deterred from using. But I agree that the price of it, unfortunately doesn't seem to have made that much of a difference."*

*"It is so expensive nowadays, I buy them by the carton and we're talking like \$80 a carton. Back when I started, you know, like I say, the army gave him to us, and then if you did buy them you got them for a huge discount with the post exchange. I think they were, I think I used to pay like three, \$3 a carton, maybe. So the financial aspect, that's big too. I mean, you know, just think what I could do, if I'm smoking three cartons a month that's another, that's \$250 a month. I could be doing something smart with."*

## Messages Should be Placed on Social Media, TV, Radio, and Places that Veterans Frequent

### Social media

*"Advertise on bigger platforms like Amazon or Facebook."*

*"Twitter, Instagram"*

*"I would be curious, .. as people who are not currently smoking any more, I don't know if we're not seeing ads on social media because of that factor, but I don't know if people who are current smokers might see them.... Just to think of that potential algorithm."*

*"Twitter, tik tok"*

*"Facebook. Any social media outlets."*

### Sports channels

*"If someone wants input on where to place their ads, it should be on the specialty channels. And I would concentrate on sports."*

### Veteran service organizations, armories, the VA

*"If you displayed them at all the legions and VFWs. The guard bases and the Navy base."*

*"Having it available. Having it at armories, the various military bases around the state. I would also just add veteran courts. If the veterans are going through a veteran court process or a veteran mentorship process ... most likely they have a tobacco issue."*

*"Coming out to some of our events, like going through the protocol to get a table and be with our service men and women and having those handouts, that kind of grassroots level thing."*

*"If you got permission from the VA to post some things over at Togus or some of the CBOC ... the vet centers. ... certainly veterans go where anyone else goes."*

*"Vet center on Westminster street. And also the veteran clinic."*

### Grocery stores, liquor stores, gas stations

*"Grocery stores and liquor stores. Most of the people who smoke, also drink. They have two vices not one."*

*"I would just add gas stations too. You know how you have that speaker that turns on when you fill up. So that video and that audio."*

*"Dollar stores."*

*"Bulletin boards in shopping centers and grocery stores."*

*"I would hit the auto parts stores, VIP, NAPA. ... You might even find the local pubs. Ask them to hang them in the bathrooms. ... The hardware store. ... I would not see this in Togus, not unless I went there to pick somebody up."*

#### **Church halls where they hold meetings**

*"Alanon and sort of groups potentially as well."*

#### **Radio**

*"I know central and northern Maine, Voice of Maine is a very popular radio station. ... A lot of veterans, particularly the ones that we're talking about, the 50 and older crowd are very big listeners."*

*"Probably at the VA first. I have never seen a sign talking about a Maine page. I've never seen anything about that. So it's obviously not in a place that veterans are going to."*

#### **Public places**

*"Shelters, grocery stores, post office, library, public places."*

*"Food banks."*

#### **Homeless shelters**

*"Homeless shelters."*

#### **Higher Ed campuses**

*"I think around school campuses is a great spot. There are a lot of veterans who get out of the military and go back to school. ... Also in the doctor's offices, like in the VA and their buildings, that's a good spot."*

*"Also ROTC programs at colleges."*

#### **Maine.gov**

*"I work for the state and putting it on the, I haven't seen it on the state website, but if anybody applies for unemployment, if they're looking for a job, if they're looking for professional licensing, or any type of state resources, they're going on Maine.gov."*

### **Healthcare offices**

*"Medical centers."*

*"Togus primary care."*

*"Put them in the waiting rooms at the VA. ... You always have time in the waiting room, at least 10-15 minutes."*

*"Androscoggin home health."*

*"And a lot of veterans do not get their care from the VA, they get it in the community. So I think it needs to be a little more focused on community health care places. ... Is there any of this out there in the primary care physicians offices? That's where you're going to get more Veterans there then you will at the VA."*

### **Pharmacies**

*"Pharmacies, CVS, Hannaford, Walgreens."*

### **Public housing**

*"Senior housing. Subsidized housing. Lewiston housing authority. They have a lot of different apartment buildings and they discourage smoking."*



## Veterans Preferred Materials that were Tailored to Veterans

Materials designed with patriotic symbols and say “veterans” at the top would catch a veteran’s eye. The eagles, flags, and pictures of veterans were appealing. One participant mentioned that the military was actively trying to move away from gender stereo types and so preferred the materials with a man and a woman in them. Others did not favor the older looking veteran, saying it was a different generation. The participants liked the tailored messaging and the multiple options for contacting the Quitlink. The veterans liked the idea of a service members tab on the Quitlink website, similar to the pregnant women tab. They had specific feedback for the wording – saying former or active military would reach the most people. The participants also liked the coupon for “free” NRT, saying anything free is good and NRT works well.

*“From a smokers standpoint, I am a smoker and I have smoked my entire life. But if I was interested in quitting smoking, I am a vet, Hey Vet, would catch my eye. ..And it's just, there's an awful lot of text. There's an awful lot of information here to throw to somebody, to sit down. And actually, I mean to sit down and read this, you're talking a minute, minute and a half. Most people when they go by and read something and they read it for the first 10 to 15 seconds, and then they move on, you need to catch your eye and get their attention. I would just, as a suggestion, you've outlined each one of these categories and their own paragraphs and was wondering if it would be like text this number, phone this number. And then if there's more information down below a little bit more in depth, like the app store or something to make it so it's this part of your information. ...I just think that that's like, veterans being on the second line, like that suggests it should be on the top to get. I just think that information should be up top to be like, okay.”*

*“I think I would hit them with all the brutal information, the phone number and the text and the Hey Vets, get their attention for these two. ...You want to make it patriotic, I'm a huge patriot and anything that has a flag on it usually catches my attention, no ifs, ands, or buts about it. So if you see a flag and you see that, Hey vet, you know what I mean? And something with a verb and then the quit smoking underneath it with, you know, cause you got a phone number here, there's a text saying, there's a phone number there... Guys like it upfront in front in their face. If it isn't in front of us. We won't see it.”*

*“Veterans with a flag and say free tobacco resources.”*

*“As a former smoker, you are always looking for the easy way out when you are thinking of quitting smoking. The first one [pointing to NRT], that's the easy way I can get a replacement. I don't have to really go crazy over this. That would be my preference. That would be the number I would call. Because it's the simplest and it seems the easiest.”*

*"The thing that stands out is the eagle and the flag."*

*"I would say it would depend on where they are posted. If they're in common areas like dining halls and like a bulletin board where they post their activities and so forth."*

*"The issue you also have with older veterans is that we don't have computers. Text messages, a lot of Veterans I know don't use text."*

*"I know you are trying to reach veterans and the one thing that reaches them is the flag and the eagle but the VA is not the total resource."*

*"I agree, stopping [instead of the word quit/quitting] would work better."*

### **Quitlink Tab for Veterans**

*"Having something specific to that military connection can sometimes be really important for people."*

*"Maybe rewording it as service members. I was in the national guard so I never thought of myself as a veteran. I now do. I know others who still feel that way."*

*"Those who have served or those in service because then it's a larger catchment area."*

*"I don't think adding a tab is necessarily going to help until you get people to the website and none of us had even seen it. ... That would be the priority first."*

*"I think it would have to be more than service member. Because when places offer service member discount, like I'm not an active service member. If it said something like prior service or actively serving I think that would reach the whole audience."*

### **Coupon for NRT**

*"As a former smoker, you are always looking for the easy way out when you are thinking of quitting smoking. The first one [pointing to NRT], that's the easy way I can get a replacement. I don't have to really go crazy over this. That would be my preference. That would be the number I would call. Because it's the simplest and it seems the easiest."*

*"This is great. Anything free is great."*

*"I really didn't catch the NRT. I had to read a little further to get that. Maybe make the gum, patches, and lozenges larger."*

*"I think the rack cards are less likely to be used at first. ... The other thing is I think focusing more on veterans coaching veterans. ... The other thing is maybe folks need more about the free NRT on the poster. ... I see a text support but that's not guarantee that it will be veterans that will support you. The national quit line but that doesn't mean that veterans will be helping you... There just needs to be some tweaking of the poster that I think might benefit it."*

*"I think the problem with this is half the veterans feel like they don't deserve it. Or they feel like they are taking it away from someone that needs it more. ... Maybe saying free assistance [instead of help]."*

*"I know it's there. I'm more intrigued with hypnotism. Maybe adding some more rewards."*

### Places and Resources for Veterans to Find Help for Quitting Tobacco Use

When asked where they would go for help in quitting tobacco, participants mentioned the VA, CBOCs, doctor's office, and helpline. They explained that their veteran service organizations share information with them, and they would look at information from those communications. They also said they would google search to find resources.

*"The VA."*

*"Perhaps Google, just to look up resources."*

*"I think if you want to stop smoking, you'll use whatever resources are available."*

*"Newspapers"*

*"We send general emails to our members."*

*"Periodically I get stuff from the VFW."*

*"Facebook does have a lot of information on it. That would be a good place."*

*"CBOCs, doctor's office, call the helpline."*

*"Email. From the VA themselves. They send a huge newsletter with links and services."*

## Veterans Mentoring or Coaching Other Veterans is an Effective Approach

The participating veterans felt strongly that the veteran-helping-veteran model is very effective and could be successfully employed to help with tobacco cessation. They described the importance of having someone who also served as a person they could relate to when discussing tobacco use.

*"I think having currently serving people especially having senior mentors that they respect who they can mimic the behaviors of, and those mentors can be civilian or military too, because we do have civilian people in our organization who guard members do look up to and they do rely on for resources."*

*"A lot of times veterans won't seek help at all. So that's another problem is they won't go to other people for help. .. Could go back to not identifying as a veteran or not feeling worthy of the help."*

*"I would rather a veteran helping me than a normal civilian because it's more relatable."*

*"I think that people are more open to it. I definitely, agree with it. I think veterans and military are more open when other people have the same status, so to say, approach them or try to help them. Like I work in veteran services and talking with the other people who do it, you know, we do like when it's just other veterans there to help out, it's more comforting in a way."*

*"My job is working with veterans, and you have to be a veteran to even apply for a position like mine. I think it's true veterans working with other veterans, you have something in common right away...I definitely think that veterans working with other veterans is a big advantage."*

*"I agree with that. I think that's the case. ... If I had the choice of pursuing help via one of two avenues, and one of them included some sort of veteran that's going to be able to provide that, I'm more likely to head in that direction. ... There's going to be that immediate rapport."*

*"Veterans do better with veterans. Being able to talk peer to peer. If there is a peer that is able to talk and communicate with and the veteran wants to quit I think that would work."*

## Current Training for Veterans on Tobacco Use

*"Yeah, so the Marine Corps, and the Navy it's one department, they have established annual training that every Marine is to do a tobacco cessation. It's like a fiscal year requirement. So, it's not that hard to complete. It's an online thing that you can do that every Marine can do. But most of the time it'll be a leader led conversation. You know, your squad leader, or your platoon Sergeant, your different levels of supervisors are explaining the perils of smoking. Except for that, it's the people giving those explanations may not know much about it. I've even been guilty of it. Hey, we need to get this training done. Smoking is bad for you. It'll kill you, stop doing it. Right. And you'll sign this roster. ...They do have programs for the more serious members that are trying to quit that they could go and get into."*

*"As a former military member that quit smoking 3 years ago, I can only imagine that you won't get much participation because of the significant efforts in the annual training curricula for "tobacco cessation". In fact, there are literally memes all over the internet about Marine Corps tobacco cessation classes in Marine Net that were a colossal waist of time. I can't speak for the other branches, but I bet it was a DOD wide mandate to have that training be mandatory."*

## Supports Needed from CTI (For Those Who Work with Veterans)

*"If they made printed materials more available. I've got material on every drug you can imagine, drinking, all the drugs, marijuana, we have all the pamphlets on stress and anger and domestic violence, covers everything, but I got nothing on tobacco."*

*"More resources for the new age would be a good idea."*

## Veterans Believe VSO's that Allow Indoor Smoking Have Little Interest in Going Smokefree

Social clubs that operated before 2014 in Maine have the option of polling their members to allow smoking indoors. In Maine, there are a number of clubs that vote to allow the practice. When asked if there was an opportunity to help these clubs transition to non-smoking, most participants thought the opportunity is limited. Some participants thought that the clubs may shift to banning indoor smoking over time as membership among younger people and women continues to decline and they need new members to sustain their operations. Participants described how some veterans like to have a place socialize and be with other veterans. Social clubs that allow indoor smoking are some of the only places where veterans who smoke can share a cigarette break inside. Some participants noted that veterans don't like to be told what to do, noting the importance of respecting veterans' rights to smoke indoors at participating social clubs. They recommended working with the social clubs in partnership instead of telling them what to do as a way of establishing good will and minimizing hostility.

*"I think culturally we'll see that shift. Girls stopped being members. I think that's just a slow cultural shift that will end up happening. And I think that's the only way you're going to influence that is by strictly talking about membership, because you know, old salty veterans who want to drink and smoke and commiserate with one another, they're just gonna do that. ... They're going to be very set in their ways. I think, it'll definitely be a, we're no longer attracting new members with our current operating policy [argument]. I think that's what it'll take to, to change that, to be honest."*

*"Yeah. I like the freedom aspect of the kind of private sector area to make a decision in your little club. I've seen smoking clubs before, primarily cigar clubs. I think it's worthwhile to make an interface with those groups to say, Hey, just for all the reasons, including maybe primarily the health reasons, if it's there and available, I think that's a good first step. Versus maybe something else, but I think it's still a worthwhile interface with those groups."*

*"Good luck."*

*"I think policy changes should be addressed within each group."*

*"Most of them don't want to stop smoking and it appeals to veterans because they can go hangout with other veterans in a social setting and have a place to smoke whereas they can't do that anywhere else. ... I think any pushback would piss off people."*

*"I think the bigger problem is you can't keep focusing on specifically veterans. I think you need to make not smoking rewarding in the military. ... Like we said you only get*

*breaks when you are smoking, you only get breaks when you are doing things that aren't actually positive. ... It was kind of frustrating when you see every hour someone goes to smoke for 15 minutes and I'm doing this maintenance for 8 hours in a 120 degree engine room but I can't take a break because I'm not smoking. ... You have to find a way to reward the good behavior not punish the bad behavior."*

*"I think all of us veterans, are very pro for our rights. If you try to violate our rights there is going to be a huge pushback. Whereas if you add rewards and don't try to punish you'll be in favor of everybody."*

*"Well I think they're only going to help them if they want to be smoke free. A lot of these veteran organizations, I just joined the American Legion not too long ago. The generations there, I'm 38 and I was the youngest guy in the room. ... It's all old timer military."*

*"Those organizations, it is the older generations of veterans. And I think the only way that they'll be smoke-free is with time when the younger generation moves in. And I know there's less and less smokers nowadays that are tobacco users in general. And also with that time, cause I haven't even thought about joining an organization because it is just people much, much older than myself. Cause I'm 27."*

## Outreach to Veteran Service Organizations in Maine to Understand Opportunities for Sharing CTI Messages

### Background

In March 2021, MaineHealth Center for Tobacco Independence enlisted the services of Patricia Hart at Hart Consulting to conduct an assessment and identify opportunities to share tobacco cessation resources with veterans in Maine. CTI's interests were two-fold: firstly, to understand opportunities within the veteran service organizations to share information to their members and secondly, to identify opportunities to conduct focus groups with veterans around the state. This section shares the findings from the interviews with representatives of the veteran service organizations in Maine.

### One-on-one Interviews

Hart Consulting used a mix of referrals from known contacts and cold calls/emails to schedule discussions with the professionals who work with veterans in Maine. Out of many attempts through phone and email to reach 35 people identified as leaders in communication to veterans, we were successful in completing 13 interviews with veteran service professionals and three public health professionals working on tobacco cessation promotion and training. The 13 interviews included representatives from many of Maine's largest service organizations including Maine Bureau of Veteran Services, Maine National Guard Retiree Services, American Legion Maine Department, and Maine Disabled Veterans. The interviews also included Veteran Services at University of Southern Maine and University of Maine at Augusta. The interviewees worked with veterans in a variety of settings including retired veterans, veterans seeking job training, homeless veterans, and veterans pursuing higher education. There were two professionals focused on working with women veterans. See Table 1 for a full list of key contact interviews as well as five other contacts that provided background information on tobacco use and smoking in social clubs. The outreach took far longer than anticipated due to job changes, COVID-19 delays, and spring/summer vacations.

### Findings

The Maine Bureau of Veterans Services estimates over 300,000 Mainers have been affected by military service, whether as a veteran, retiree, family member, Guard or Reserve, or active-duty personnel. Many of them are impacted by tobacco use. Moreover, there are over 400 veterans service organizations that work directly with veterans to help them get benefits and supports.

### Eager to Help CTI Share Materials

The veteran serving professionals are very eager to help share materials on tobacco cessation. In general, the professionals see a need for providing tobacco cessation information to veterans and felt that having the information shared through their organizations may add credibility. The organizations have a mix of newsletters and in-person meeting opportunities where they see



the benefit of having tobacco specialists either share information or offer a presentation. Some of the organizations receive their newsletters from federal sources and so do not have opportunities to add local content. Most require permissions from a communications director to include information and would need some lead time to obtain those approvals.

**Use Many Channels and Media to Share Information.** Several shared that many veterans and retired military do not receive services through the Veterans Administration. Sharing information through many channels including primary care offices outside of the VA is a good strategy to reach as many veterans as possible.

**Veterans Helping Veterans is Best Practice.** The veteran service organization professionals see value in training veterans as peer counselors to aid in tobacco cessation. They felt that veterans are far more willing to talk with and listen to another veteran than a non-veteran.

## Veteran Service Organizations with Outreach Opportunities in Maine

### American Legion, Department of Maine

The American Legion has 172 posts statewide, each with a local Commander and supporting officers. The state-level Legion has quarterly meetings and annual meeting where legionnaires come together to learn about benefits and other supports. There are opportunities to share information as follows:

- Share a presentation at [the annual state convention](#)
- Share presentations and materials with [local chapters](#)
- Share information at [District Meetings](#)
- E-news comes from federal sources
- [State-level e-news, The Maine Legionnaire, reaches 22,000](#)

### Disabled American Veterans (DAV) in Maine

The Disabled American Veterans organization helps veterans who are transitioning out of service to access benefits, find support, and link to services. They support employment efforts, provide rides to medical appointments, and help with benefit claims. Maine has one location in Hampden that serves the state. Their social media and newsletters come from national sources, but they may have a local email list.

### Easterseals

Easterseals has a strong military and veterans re-entry support programming in Maine. They provide housing, emergency funding, and other supports for veterans. They provide services when active military members and veterans hit a gap where benefits do not provide enough support.

- Their [Maine website can be found here](#).
- They have a facebook page

### Maine Bureau of Veterans Services (MBVS)

The Maine Bureau of Veterans Services consider themselves “the one-stop shop” for active military, retired military, and veterans services in Maine. The Bureau’s mission is to help active and retired military and veterans access services. Located at Camp Keyes in Augusta, they also have seven field offices across Maine. They send monthly newsletters to 8,000 person mail list. There are opportunities to share information as follows:

- [Share information with field offices](#)
- [Monthly newsletters](#)

### Maine Department of Labor - Hire a Vet Program

The Hire a Vet Program is run by the Maine Department of Labor. Each year they have a large employer event at the Augusta Civic Center. There is an opportunity to host a table during the event to share resources. There are opportunities to share information as follows:

- [Hire a Vet Event – host a table](#)

### Maine Military Community Networks

The Maine Military Community Network (MMCN) is a community effort to understand, prevent, and help address the challenges faced by current and former military members and their families. They have regional groups in eleven locations across the state. They have monthly or quarterly meetings where they share information and supports for veterans. There are opportunities to share information as follows:

- [Regional groups](#)
- Each regional group may have a mailing list

### Maine National Guard

The Maine National Guard is a professional organization of soldiers and airmen serving in Maine. They are headquartered in Augusta at Camp Chamberlain and have 12 company locations across Maine. The Maine National Guard has an office that helps retiring guardsmen access their benefits. They have a large distribution list of “retirees” and some active duty.

There are opportunities to share information as follows:

- [Share information via the email communications to 3,000 active and retired guardsmen](#)
- [Social media opportunities](#)
- [Share information at various company sites](#)
- [Share information with health officers at Camp Chamberlain](#)

### University of Maine System, UMA and USM Veterans Program

The University of Maine System is a veteran friendly system of higher education. As such, each of its campuses host various veterans’ programs. USM and UMA have very active veterans’ programs.

- [University of Maine Systems Veterans Programs at each campus](#)
- [UMA Director of Veterans Services](#), interested in sharing information
- [USM Director of Veterans Services](#) is interested in sharing information

### US Department of Veterans Affairs - Togus Healthcare System

The US Department of Veterans Affairs has a large healthcare complex in Chelsea, Maine just outside of Augusta. The 67-bed facility offers general medical, surgical, intermediate, and mental health beds as well as a 100-bed nursing home with 50 of those beds as skilled care and 50-bed dementia.

Togus provides primary, specialty, and preventive care in outpatient settings throughout the state. These clinics, called **Community-Based Outpatient Care (CBOCs)** are in Bangor, Calais, Caribou, Lewiston, Lincoln, Portland, Rumford, and Saco as well as three (3) part-time Access points in Bingham, Fort Kent and Houlton.

The Togus healthcare system also has a close relationship with the five **(5) VET Centers in Maine**, located in Bangor, Caribou, Lewiston, Portland, and Sanford. They provide readjustment counseling to Vietnam and post-Vietnam Era veterans. There are opportunities to share information as follows:

- With providers at Togus to share with their clients on the campus
- Bus stops and other areas where veterans spend time (waiting rooms, cafeteria, etc.) may be a good place to post information
- [With the tobacco cessation specialists at Togus who work with the CBOCs](#)
- [Local CBOCs to share information](#)
- [VET Centers to share information](#)

### Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)

The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) is a service organization that helps veterans access benefits and services. Oftentimes they have their own building or post where they meet, hold fundraisers, and have gatherings. There are opportunities to share information as follows:

- [With the local posts](#)

### Volunteers of America Northern New England

Volunteers of America Northern New England work with homeless veterans to find them transitional and supportive living arrangement. Based in Brunswick, VOANNE operates housing and support services for veterans in Augusta at Cabin in the Woods on the Togus Campus, in Saco, and in Biddeford. They hold informational programs for their residents and are interested in sharing information on tobacco cessation. There are opportunities to share information as follows:

- Veterans Supported [Housing locations](#)

## State Level Professionals Working with Veterans Interested in Sharing Tobacco Information with Veterans

Name Organization Title Email Phone # Other						
Key Contacts for Sharing Information with Veterans						
1	Debbie Couture	American Legion	Commander	navycaptpomi0031@gmail.com		Women Legion Commander
2	Auta Main	Retired from Hire a Vet Program		Not public		Shared names and contact information for 12 people
3	Wendy Moody	Maine National Guard	Transition Assistance Advisor	wendy.j.moody2.ctr@mail.com	(207) 430-5778	Sends an e-blast to 3000+ veterans weekly
4	Sarah Sherman	Maine Bureau of Veterans Services (MBVS)	Director Policy & Programs Homeless Coord.	<a href="mailto:david.a.richmond@maine.gov">david.a.richmond@maine.gov</a> <a href="mailto:sarah.sherman@maine.gov">sarah.sherman@maine.gov</a> <a href="mailto:jarad.greeley@maine.gov">jarad.greeley@maine.gov</a>	(207)287-8892 (207) 430-5816 (207) 430-6036	The "One-Stop" for all veterans and military members in Maine. They do a monthly newsletter.
5	Andy Gibson	Maine Dept of Labor	Veterans' Program Mgr	<a href="mailto:andrew.l.gibson@maine.gov">andrew.l.gibson@maine.gov</a>	(207) 623-7975	Leads the veterans' employment program for Labor. Ten vet reps located around state.
6	Kylie Higgins	VA Togus	Homeless Program Mgr	<a href="mailto:kylie.higgins@va.gov">kylie.higgins@va.gov</a>	(207) 623-8411	Works with homeless (or near homeless) veterans throughout

	Name	Organization	Title	Email	Phone #	Other
						Maine to assist w housing and resources.
7	Joy Asunsion	<b>Retired Navy</b>	Started Maine Women Veterans FB Page	<a href="mailto:joy.asuncion@roadrunner.com">joy.asuncion@roadrunner.com</a>		Volunteers to assist with veterans on many levels from development of the Women Veterans FB page (1,200 members) to Honor Flight and more.
8 9	Jen Giroux Nicole Frydrych	<b>Volunteers of America Northern New England</b>	GPD Case Mgr Community Coordinator	<a href="mailto:jennifer.giroux@voanne.org">jennifer.giroux@voanne.org</a> <a href="mailto:nicole.frydrych@voanne.org">nicole.frydrych@voanne.org</a>	(207) 402-0134 (207) 530-9504	Jen works with veterans statewide, case managing resources and services. Nicole focuses on veterans living at Cabin in the Woods on the Togus Campus.  <b>Is interested in bringing CTI resources into Togus and other transitional housing</b>
10	Amy Line	<b>UMA</b>	Director of Veterans Affairs			<b>Very helpful sharing information will put posters up at the school</b>
11	Jerry Dewitt	<b>Western MMCN AMVETS New Gloucester</b>	Commander	<a href="mailto:jdewitt@tcmhs.org">jdewitt@tcmhs.org</a>		Very connected throughout Maine, very helpful and works at Tri-County Mental Health Services
12	Lorrie Spaulding	<b>USM/Southern Maine MMCN</b>	Director of Veterans Affairs	<a href="mailto:aaron.dombroski@maine.edu">aaron.dombroski@maine.edu</a>		Very helpful – will share information locally

	Name	Organization	Title	Email	Phone #	Other
13	Reverand Sivret	AmVETS Calais		Not public		Participated in interview, too busy for further outreach
14	Kim Slininger	MMCN Bangor DAV Hampden		kimsewme@yahoo.com		Business Owner/Horse Therapy for Veterans
Participated in Interview						
15	Victoria Hynes	MaineHealth Center for Tobacco Independence	Tobacco Treatment Training and Education Program Manager	<a href="mailto:vhynes@mainehealth.org">vhynes@mainehealth.org</a>		Develops training for CTI
16	Joanne and Elizabeth	Healthy Communities of the Capital Area		<a href="mailto:i.joy@hccme.org">i.joy@hccme.org</a> <a href="mailto:e.deprey@hccme.org">e.deprey@hccme.org</a>		
17	Elizabeth Reardon	Office of the Attorney General, State of Maine	Assistant Attorney General	Elizabeth.reardon@maine.gov		
18	Garth Smith	Maine CDC	Public Health Educator III	Garth.smith@maine.gov		
Other Potential Contacts						
		Maine Military and Community Network (MMCN) Groups		<a href="http://mainemcn.com">Regional Groups   Maine Military &amp; Community Network (mainemcn.com)</a>	1-888-365-9287	MMCN groups work with military members and veterans on a variety of regional issues including transportation, healthcare, employment, housing and more.

Name	Organization	Title	Email	Phone #	Other
		<b>FB PAGES for Maine Vets</b>	FB PAGES FOR Maine VETS - Maine Veterans Outreach - Maine Women Veterans - Maine Veterans Project - Helping Maine Veterans - Hire A Vet Campaign Maine		
Paul L'Heureux	<b>Maine American Legion</b>		<a href="mailto:paul@mainelegion.org">paul@mainelegion.org</a>		Did not respond to multiple outreach contacts
	<b>AMVETS</b>		<a href="mailto:jlaflin@roadrunner.com">jlaflin@roadrunner.com</a>		Did not respond to multiple outreach contacts
Herman Littlefield	<b>Veterans of Foreign Wars</b>		<a href="mailto:herman.littlefield@yahoo.com">herman.littlefield@yahoo.com</a> or <a href="mailto:thedumas@gwi.net">thedumas@gwi.net</a>		Did not respond to multiple outreach contacts
	<b>Women's Veterans in Maine</b>		<a href="mailto:ME@womenvetsusa.org">ME@womenvetsusa.org</a>		Did not respond to multiple outreach contacts
Kirk Grant	<b>VA Centers</b>				Did not respond to multiple outreach contacts
Cathy Burgess	<b>Togus</b>	Tobacco Cessation Training and Outreach			Did not respond to multiple outreach contacts



Name		Organization	Title	Email	Phone #	Other
	John DeVeau@unit edveteransof maine.org	<b>MMCN Aroostook</b>		jdeveau@unitedveterans ofmaine.org		Did not respond to multiple outreach contacts

## Web Scan and Review of Select State and National Programs

Hart Consulting conducted a web scan of tobacco cessation programs on the state and national levels. The web scan included New England states and those that have a high proportion of veteran residents. They reviewed national and state programs for their design, eligibility requirements, tailoring to veterans, formatting of resources, location of resources, and key messages.

### Summary of Findings

#### **Tobacco cessation programs**

- Tobacco cessation programs offer a range of resources including group discussions with veterans, telephone lines, texting lines, one-on-one counseling, medications, and informative resources on the health, behavioral, physical, and familial impacts of tobacco use.
- The tobacco cessation programs/resources for veterans provided on the national scale include YouCanQuit2, QuitVET, and those through the TRICARE insurance.
- Many states offered information on health-related effects of smoking in the veteran population and provided links to available national programs.
- State specific tobacco cessation programs/resources were usually open to the public and not veteran specific.

#### **Location of resources**

- Information on tobacco cessation programs found on state or federal websites include:
  - U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs
  - State specific veteran affairs websites
  - U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention
  - State healthcare websites
  - Websites of state and federally funded programs
- These websites provide information on the health effects of smoking in general and the higher prevalence of tobacco use in the veteran population.
- These websites also provide links to specific programs (usually national programs) that are tailored to tobacco cessation for the veteran population.

#### **Formatting of resources**

- Veteran specific websites, like the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs or TRICARE, used patriotic colors, photos of active service duty members and veterans, and photos of veterans with children.

- Healthcare specific websites used a variety of colors. These colors were not presented in the patriotic manner seen on veteran specific websites. Photos of older adults playing with children were also used.
- Materials from tobacco cessation programs used images of service members in training and competing in athletic competitions. The images used were active in nature and included family members. These photos emphasized teamwork.
- Materials for veteran specific tobacco cessation programs and healthcare websites use personal narrative and photos of veterans who have quit smoking.

**Eligibility**

- Program eligibility varies from open access to all individuals seeking resources in tobacco cessation, to veteran specific programs, to insurance specific requirements for veterans and service members.
- The most restrictive programs are those that provide ongoing counseling and free or subsidized tobacco cessation medications. Many of these programs are offered under TRICARE (veteran and military service member insurance plan), or at the state and national level with requirement of VA specific healthcare.
- Some services offered through TRICARE were not available for beneficiaries who were eligible for Medicare Part B.
- Some state specific tobacco cessation programs required proof of state residency.

## Review of Programs in Select States

Alaska			
Questions	Notes	Source	Last Updated
Resources to help veterans stop smoking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs – Alaska branch:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information on health benefits of quitting tobacco</li> </ul> </li> <li>The Tobacco Cessation Group               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Virtual meetings weekly open to veterans and providers to have discussions on strategies for quitting</li> </ul> </li> <li>Tobacco Quit Line</li> <li>Veterans Listening Session               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Area where veterans can address any current issues including smoking cessation</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Quitting Tobacco For A Happy Heart - Alaska VA Healthcare System</a></li> <li><a href="#">My Tobacco Cessation Workbook: A Resource for Veterans (va.gov)</a></li> <li><a href="#">Alaska's Tobacco Quit Line   1-800-QUIT-NOW (alaskaquitline.com)</a></li> <li><a href="#">Veterans Listening Session - Alaska VA Healthcare System</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nov. 2020</li> <li>2021</li> <li>No date on website</li> <li>April 2020</li> </ul>
Resources for veterans that do not address smoking cessation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Large nationally affiliated website that does not address smoking cessation but does address other public health issues with high frequency among veterans, e.g. Mental health, and suicide prevention</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Alaska Warrior Partnership   America's Warrior Partnership (americaswarriorpartnership.org)</a></li> <li><a href="#">Alaska Coalition For Veterans and Military Families - Home (akcvmf.org)</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2021</li> <li>No date on website</li> </ul>
Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most programs open to veterans, all people, or specifically tailored to Native Alaskan groups</li> </ul>		

Alaska			
Questions	Notes	Source	Last Updated
Tailoring to veterans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal stories from veterans who have quit:</li> <li>Many resources for quitting are for those who already know they want to quit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Quitting Tobacco For A Happy Heart - Alaska VA Healthcare System</a></li> </ul>	
Formatting of resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Online articles</li> <li>Information graphics</li> <li>Mainly red, white, and blue coloring</li> </ul>		
Location of resources and how they are offered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Online resources, information videos, online meetings, Facebook advertising</li> <li>Phone resources</li> <li>In person meetings, town halls, listening sessions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Interested in Quitting Tobacco?... - Alaska VA Healthcare   Facebook</a></li> </ul>	
Key areas (i.e. locations, health, home)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health/ Returning to physical activity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Quitting Tobacco For A Happy Heart - Alaska VA Healthcare System</a></li> </ul>	
Is tobacco cessation listed as a priority?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Among native tribes – yes</li> <li>Among veterans – less so. Mental health and suicide prevention among veterans appears to be the leading priority.</li> </ul>		

Maine			
Questions	Notes	Source	Last Updated
Resources to help veterans stop smoking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Portland Mental Health Outpatient Clinic               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Comprehensive smoking cessation program to assist veterans in stopping tobacco use</li> </ul> </li> <li>Maine Tobacco Helpline               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Not veteran specific</li> <li>- MaineHealth Tobacco-Free Counseling</li> </ul> </li> <li>Center for Tobacco Independence (CTI)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Variety of in-depth resources and information fliers</li> <li>-QuitLink</li> </ul> </li> <li>Healthy Communities of the Capital Area (HCCA)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Provides resources for tobacco cessation</li> <li>-Provides trainings and resources for youth and behavioral health professionals</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Portland Mental Health Outpatient Clinic - VA Maine Healthcare System</a></li> <li><a href="#">Maine Tobacco Helpline   MaineHealth</a></li> <li><a href="#">Tobacco Treatment Resources   Center for Tobacco Independence (ctimaine.org)</a></li> <li><a href="#">HCCA - tobacco prevention</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No date provided</li> <li>2021</li> <li>2021</li> <li>2021</li> </ul>
Resources to reduce secondhand smoke exposure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CTI Information on effects of secondhand smoke               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Not veteran specific</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Tobacco Treatment Resources   Center for Tobacco Independence (ctimaine.org)</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2021</li> </ul>
Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No identified eligibility requirements</li> </ul>		
Tailoring to veterans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Program specific tailoring for veterans</li> </ul>		
Format of resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mostly red, white, and blue</li> <li>Use of bald eagle and flag on some resources</li> </ul>		
Location of resources and how they are offered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technical assistance network               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Organizes information in an online resource center</li> </ul> </li> <li>VA Maine Healthcare System under U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs</li> <li>Maine prevention store</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Maine Substance Abuse Programs - Veterans (tapartnership.org)</a></li> <li><a href="#">Clinical Training - VA Maine Healthcare System</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2021</li> <li>2018</li> <li>2021</li> </ul>

Maine			
Questions	Notes	Source	Last Updated
	-Free print materials and digital downloads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Maine Prevention Store</a></li> </ul>	
Key areas (i.e. locations, health, home)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health – VA healthcare</li> <li>• Family health – CTI</li> <li>• Prevention - HCCA</li> </ul>		
Is tobacco cessation listed as a priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A lot of resources but not on the front page of the Maine VA health care page</li> </ul>		

Massachusetts			
Questions	Notes	Source	Last Updated
Resources to help veterans stop smoking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MA Tobacco Cessation and Prevention Program (MTCP)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Not veteran specific</li> <li>-Prevention program aimed at nicotine and tobacco use among youth, helping current users quit, and protecting others from secondhand smoke</li> </ul> </li> <li>Don't give up on quitting - VA Central Western Massachusetts Healthcare System               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Combination of group sessions, individual counseling, and nicotine replacement medications</li> </ul> </li> <li>Massachusetts Smokers' Helpline               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-General quit line</li> <li>-Not veteran specific</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Massachusetts Tobacco Cessation and Prevention Program (MTCP)   Mass.gov</a></li> <li><a href="#">Don't Give Up On Quitting - VA Central Western Massachusetts Healthcare System</a></li> <li><a href="#">Quit nicotine/tobacco or support someone in their quit attempt   Mass.gov</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2021</li> <li>2012: Outdated program</li> <li>2021</li> </ul>
Resources to reduce secondhand smoke exposure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MA Tobacco cessation and prevention program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Massachusetts Tobacco Cessation and Prevention Program (MTCP)   Mass.gov</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2021</li> </ul>
Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Don't Give Up on Quitting program               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Required VA healthcare</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Don't Give Up On Quitting - VA Central Western Massachusetts Healthcare System</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2012</li> </ul>
Tailoring to veterans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Don't Give Up on Quitting program               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Specific to veterans and service members</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Don't Give Up On Quitting - VA Central Western Massachusetts Healthcare System</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2012</li> </ul>
Format of resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Don't Give Up on Quitting is a journal article posting with a posed discussion session</li> <li>Use of posed medical professionals and veterans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Don't Give Up On Quitting - VA Central Western Massachusetts Healthcare System</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2012</li> </ul>
Location of resources and how they are offered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personalized stories from veterans with pictures and Q&amp;A responses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Great American Smokeout - VA New England Healthcare System</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2020</li> </ul>



Massachusetts			
Questions	Notes	Source	Last Updated
Key areas (i.e. locations, health, home)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Key areas of focus are health related</li><li>• Tailored to individuals who are already looking to stop smoking</li></ul>		
Is tobacco cessation listed as a priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Not as much within state resources</li></ul>		

New Hampshire			
Questions	Notes	Source	Last Updated
Resources to help veterans stop smoking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quit Now New Hampshire               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Resources for veterans and Military members</li> <li>-Offers links to national campaigns focused on veterans and tobacco use</li> <li>-Offers links for public NH based tobacco programs that are not veteran specific</li> </ul> </li> <li>QuitNow-NH (1-800-QUIT-NOW)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-telephone line for help with tobacco cessation</li> <li>-Offers tips from former users</li> <li>-Not veteran specific</li> </ul> </li> <li>New Hampshire Tobacco Prevention &amp; Cessation Program               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Not veteran specific</li> <li>-Primary goal: prevention for youth</li> <li>-Second hand smoke exposure</li> <li>-Helping users quit</li> <li>-Monitoring groups using</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Veterans / Military - QuitNow New Hampshire (quitnownh.org)</a></li> <li><a href="#">Quit Now New Hampshire (quitnownh.org)</a></li> <li><a href="#">Tobacco Prevention &amp; Cessation Program   Division of Public Health Services   NH Department of Health and Human Services</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2021</li> <li>• 2021</li> <li>• 2016</li> </ul>
Resources to reduce secondhand smoke exposure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quit Now New Hampshire resources on secondhand smoke exposure               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Not veteran specific</li> <li>-Health related information on the consequences of secondhand smoke to various populations</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Secondhand Smoke - QuitNow New Hampshire (quitnownh.org)</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2021</li> </ul>
Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No specific eligibility requirements as most state programs are open to the public</li> </ul>		
Tailoring to veterans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information can be found on veteran services sites, but no state run veteran specific programs</li> </ul>		
Format of resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The QuitNow New Hampshire program has images/ quotes from previous users</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Quit Now New Hampshire (quitnownh.org)</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2021</li> </ul>
Location of resources and how they are offered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resources are located on government sites</li> <li>Other resources can be linked through veteran and service member sites</li> </ul>		

New Hampshire			
Questions	Notes	Source	Last Updated
Key areas (locations, health, home)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Key areas of focus are health related</li></ul>		
Is tobacco cessation listed as a priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Statewide tobacco cessation program</li><li>• No state programs that are veteran specific</li></ul>		

Rhode Island			
Questions	Notes	Source	Last Updated
Resources to help veterans quit smoking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>VA Providence Healthcare System – RI Dept of Health &amp; PVAMC Campaign to help Vets Quit Smoking               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Veterans' Free Nicotine Patch Campaign</li> <li>-Free two-week supply of nicotine patches after starting counseling with the Smokers' Helpline</li> </ul> </li> <li>Smoking cessation clinic</li> <li>QuitWorks-RI               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Free phone counseling service</li> <li>-Not specifically tailored to veterans</li> </ul> </li> <li>Rhode Island Nicotine Helpline               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Free phone service that connects those who are looking to quit with counseling, self-help tools, and referrals</li> <li>-Not specifically tailored to veterans</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">RI Dept of Health &amp; PVAMC Campaign to Help Vets Quit Smoking - VA Providence Healthcare System</a></li> <li><a href="#">QuitWorks-RI: Department of Health</a></li> <li><a href="#">Rhode Island Nicotine Helpline: Department of Health (ri.gov)</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2012 – outdated and no longer active</li> <li>2021</li> <li>2021</li> </ul>
Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For the Free Nicotine Patch Campaign:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Must be active, inactive, and or retired armed forces</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">RI Dept of Health &amp; PVAMC Campaign to Help Vets Quit Smoking - VA Providence Healthcare System</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2012 – outdated and no longer active</li> </ul>
Tailoring to veterans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unable to find current programs tailored to addressing tobacco cessation among veterans</li> </ul>		
Format of resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Government website</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Services: Department of Health (ri.gov)</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2021</li> </ul>
Location of resources and how they are offered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mostly through the RI state department of health website</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Services: Department of Health (ri.gov)</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2021</li> </ul>
Key areas (i.e. locations, health, home)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information comes out of the state department of health – health focus</li> </ul>		
Is Tobacco cessation listed as a priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Less so than other areas</li> </ul>		

Vermont			
Questions	Notes	Source	Last Updated
Resources to help veterans stop smoking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Veteran and Service member resources on Vermont DOH website -link to Quit smoking and tobacco under information for veterans and service members</li> <li>• 802QUITS -Offers tobacco quit lines -Counseling by phone -Free patches, gum, and lozenges -Not veteran specific</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://healthvermont.gov/veterans-service-members">Veterans &amp; Service Members   Vermont Department of Health (healthvermont.gov)</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://healthvermont.gov/quit-smoking-tobacco">Quit Smoking and Tobacco   Vermont Department of Health (healthvermont.gov)</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2021</li> <li>• 2021</li> </ul>
Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No specific eligibility requirements -Programs are open to all people</li> </ul>		
Tailoring to veterans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited state veteran specific resources</li> </ul>		
Format of resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nonspecific websites with limited photos</li> <li>• Use of one photo of a service member and child</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://healthvermont.gov/quit-smoking-tobacco">Quit Smoking and Tobacco   Vermont Department of Health (healthvermont.gov)</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2021</li> </ul>
Location of resources and how they are offered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to tobacco cessation resources through Vermont DOH veteran services website</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://healthvermont.gov/veterans-service-members">Veterans &amp; Service Members   Vermont Department of Health (healthvermont.gov)</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2021</li> </ul>
Key areas (i.e. locations, health, home)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resources that are available are promoting health benefits of stopping tobacco use</li> </ul>		
Is Tobacco cessation listed as a priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tobacco and smoking cessation services not listed on the Office of Veterans Affairs website</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://vermont.gov/healthcare-options-veterans-their-families">Healthcare Options for Veterans and their Families   Office of Veterans Affairs (vermont.gov)</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2021</li> </ul>

Virginia			
Questions	Notes	Source	Last Updated
Resources to help veterans stop smoking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quit Now Virginia               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Tobacco quit line</li> <li>-Free telephone coaching to residents</li> <li>-Not veteran specific</li> <li>-Connected to providers and employers who can help enroll others</li> </ul> </li> <li>Virginia Health Care Foundation: Smoking Cessation               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Information and resources on smoking cessation</li> <li>-Smoking cost calculators</li> <li>-Offers guides and tips on quitting</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Quit Now Virginia – Tobacco Free Living</a></li> <li><a href="#">Virginia Health Care Foundation   Smoking Cessation (vhcf.org)</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2021</li> <li>2021</li> </ul>
Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quit Now Virginia               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-No veterans specific eligibility requirements</li> <li>-Must be a resident of Virginia and 13 years or older</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
Tailoring to veterans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited tailoring to veterans on state lead programs</li> </ul>		
Format of resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quit Now Virginia               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Website format with attached videos from former users</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Quit Now Virginia – Tobacco Free Living</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2021</li> </ul>
Location of resources and how they are offered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resources available on the Virginia Department of Health website</li> <li>Resources available on the Virginia Health Care Foundation website</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Quit Now Virginia – Tobacco Free Living</a></li> <li><a href="#">Virginia Health Care Foundation   Smoking Cessation (vhcf.org)</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2021</li> <li>2021</li> </ul>
Key areas (i.e. locations, health, home)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focusing primarily on health</li> <li>Additional focus on monetary costs associated with smoking</li> </ul>		
Is Tobacco cessation listed as a priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not among the veteran population</li> <li>No information on the Virginia Department of Veteran Services website regarding smoking cessation services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Resources   Virginia Department of Veterans Services</a></li> </ul>	

## Review of National Programs

TRICARE			
Questions	Notes	Source	Last Updated
About TRICARE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insurance plan specifically for uniformed service members, retirees, and their direct families</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Find a TRICARE Plan   TRICARE</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No dates provided</li> </ul>
Resources to help veterans quit smoking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tobacco cessation services covered:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Medications, services, and support</li> <li>-Counseling services</li> <li>-No copay for prescription and over the counter tobacco cessation products</li> <li>-Does not require diagnosis of a tobacco related illness</li> </ul> </li> <li>Annual lung cancer screenings are covered</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Tobacco Cessation Services   TRICARE</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No dates provided</li> </ul>
Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Must be one of the following:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Uniformed service member</li> <li>-National Guard/Reserve members</li> <li>-Medal of Honor recipients</li> <li>-Family members of any of the above</li> <li>-Dependent parent or parent-in-law</li> <li>-Survivors</li> <li>-Former Spouses</li> <li>-Other individuals registered in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) : <a href="#">Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System   TRICARE</a></li> </ul> </li> <li>Further clarification:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Sponsors – active duty, retired and Guard/Reserve members</li> <li>-Family members – spouses and children who are registered in DEERS</li> </ul> </li> <li>Plans vary based on the status and type of beneficiary</li> <li>For the tobacco cessation services:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Beneficiary cannot be eligible for Medicare (currently covered under Medicare Part B)</li> <li>-Must be 18 and older</li> </ul> </li> <li>For lung cancer screening eligibility               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Must be 55-80 years old</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Eligibility   TRICARE</a></li> <li><a href="#">Tobacco Cessation Services   TRICARE</a></li> <li><a href="#">Lung Cancer</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No dates provided</li> <li>No dates provided</li> <li>No dates provided</li> </ul>

TRICARE			
Questions	Notes	Source	Last Updated
	-Must have 30 pack per year history of smoking and are currently smoking or have quit within the past 15 years	<a href="#">Screening   TRICARE</a>	
Tailoring to Veterans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of patriotic colors</li> <li>• Values in health and fitness</li> <li>• Veteran/service member specific plans and counseling</li> </ul>		
Format of resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Red, white, and blue</li> <li>• Includes pictures of people smiling</li> <li>• No personal stories</li> <li>• Lots of orange (color) used when discussing tobacco cessation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Home   TRICARE</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No dates provided</li> </ul>
Location of resources and how they are offered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online resources</li> <li>-Website pages</li> <li>-Downloadable information sheets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Tobacco Cessation Services   TRICARE</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No dates provided</li> </ul>
Key areas (i.e. locations, health, home)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health</li> <li>-Long term outcomes</li> <li>• Missed work</li> <li>• Failed fitness evaluations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Tobacco Cessation Services   TRICARE</a> (select PDF on right hand side)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No dates provided</li> </ul>
Is Tobacco cessation listed as a priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes, based on full program</li> <li>-However, you have to search for tobacco cessation on the website</li> <li>-Not placed on the home page</li> </ul>		



YouCanQuit2 (ycq2)			
Questions	Notes	Source	Last Updated
About YouCanQuit2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Defense department program for the U.S. military launched in 2007</li> <li>-Information and resources for military members and health professionals on tobacco cessation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">YouCanQuit2   Tobacco Cessation Campaign for the U.S. Military (ycq2.org)</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No date provided</li> </ul>
Resources to help veterans quit smoking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information on:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Healthy habits</li> <li>-Nicotine replacement</li> <li>-Guides to stay tobacco free</li> <li>-Medicine for tobacco cessation</li> <li>-Supporting loved ones who are quitting tobacco</li> </ul> </li> <li>Live chat sessions</li> <li>Text message programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">How To Quit Tobacco   You Can Quit 2 (ycq2.org)</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No date provided</li> </ul>
Resources to reduce secondhand exposure			
Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aim of the program is to service:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Service members</li> <li>-Friends and family members of service members</li> <li>-Health professionals</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">About the YouCanQuit2 Campaign   You Can Quit 2 (ycq2.org)</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No date provided</li> </ul>
Tailoring to veterans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Military service members specific website</li> </ul>		
Format of resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pictures of military service members working in teams at training</li> <li>Service members and their family members</li> <li>Black, white, and red themed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">YouCanQuit2   Tobacco Cessation Campaign for the U.S. Military (ycq2.org)</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No date provided</li> </ul>
Location of resources and how they are offered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resources located online               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Web pages</li> <li>-Downloadable materials</li> <li>-Live chats</li> <li>-Text message programs</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">YouCanQuit2   Tobacco Cessation Campaign for the U.S. Military (ycq2.org)</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No date provided</li> </ul>
Key areas (i.e. locations, health, home)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Areas of focus for quitting:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-For your health</li> <li>-For your family/children/loved ones</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">About the YouCanQuit2 Campaign  </a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No date provided</li> </ul>

YouCanQuit2 (ycq2)			
Questions	Notes	Source	Last Updated
	-For your military unit -Monetary benefits	<a href="http://YouCanQuit2.org">You Can Quit 2 (ycq2.org)</a>	
Is Tobacco cessation listed as a priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Yes, main priority</li></ul>		

National Resources for Veterans				
List of organizations	Notes	Eligibility	Sources	Updated
TRICARE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Military service members and Veterans health insurance</li> <li>-Offer several options for tobacco cessation programs and coverage for tobacco cessation medication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See TRICARE chart above</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Tobacco Cessation   TRICARE</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No date provided</li> </ul>
YouCanQuit2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Veteran and military specific program for tobacco cessation</li> <li>-Offer a variety of programs (see chart)</li> <li>-Funded by the U.S. Department of Defense</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For service members</li> <li>Family of service members who want to help</li> <li>Healthcare providers who want to help</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">YouCanQuit2   Tobacco Cessation Campaign for the U.S. Military (ycq2.org)</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No date provided</li> </ul>
Tobacco Free Living (Air Force and Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information on tobacco use and associated health consequences</li> <li>-Provides links to resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information based</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Tobacco-Free Living (af.mil)</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No date provided</li> </ul>
Tobacco Free Living Toolkit (Army public health center)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information and links on tobacco free living and health benefits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Tobacco-Free Living &amp; Vaping - Army Public Health Center</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No date provided</li> </ul>

National Resources for Veterans				
List of organizations	Notes	Eligibility	Sources	Updated
	specific to veterans -Offers contacts -Programs -Information			
Coast Guard Tobacco Cessation Program and Resources website page	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information on tobacco cessation and health benefits</li> <li>-Coast guard policies on tobacco use</li> <li>-Program resources</li> <li>-Detailed information on TRICARE services</li> <li>-Contact lists</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tailored to Coast Guard services members</li> <li>-Mostly informative no eligibility requirements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Tobacco Cessation Program   Office of Work-Life Programs (CG-111) (uscg.mil)</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No date provided</li> </ul>
Marine Corps Tobacco Cessation Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resources for veteran specific tobacco cessation programs</li> <li>-Information on tobacco health consequences</li> <li>-Contact lists for service members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All programs are outsourced mostly information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Tobacco Cessation Program - Marine Corps Community (usmc-mccs.org)</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No date provided</li> </ul>
<i>Tips From Former Smokers</i> Military Service Members &	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stories and advice from former users who are active service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mostly informative outreach material</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Organizations Serving Military Service Members and Veterans  </a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2021</li> </ul>

National Resources for Veterans				
List of organizations	Notes	Eligibility	Sources	Updated
Veterans Media Outreach Kit	members or veterans		<a href="#">Partners   Tips From Former Smokers   CDC</a>	
Quit-VET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Telephone coaching and help with tobacco cessation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Must have health insurance through Department of Veteran Affairs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Quit VET - Mental Health (va.gov)</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2020</li> </ul>
Smokefreevet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tools and tips website for smoke-free living for veterans</li> </ul> <p>-Includes texting program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No eligibility beyond Veteran status</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Home   Smokefree Veterans</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No date provided</li> </ul>
The Battle Buddy Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Helo for service disabled combat veterans re-integrate themselves back into society</li> <li>Provides help and service dogs for veterans suffering PTSD, TBI, and physical limitations</li> <li>Provides a peer support and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Must be a disabled veteran suffering from PTSD, TBI (traumatic brain injury), and or physical limitations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="https://www.tbbf.org/about/">https://www.tbbf.org/about/</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No date provided</li> </ul>

National Resources for Veterans				
List of organizations	Notes	Eligibility	Sources	Updated
	activity network <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No specific smoking cessation programs but aimed at helping Veterans</li> </ul>			
MOVE! Weight management program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Program aimed at helping veterans manage their weight and eat healthy</li> <li>Promotes physical activity</li> <li>Offers group sessions, telephone lifestyle coaching, in home messaging, mobile app, and medications</li> <li>Not smoking specific</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provided through VA primary care</li> <li>Available to Veterans who are not receiving care at the VA, though provides limited resources compared to those that do receive care through the VA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="https://www.move.va.gov/MOVE/GetStarted.asp">https://www.move.va.gov/MOVE/GetStarted.asp</a><a href="https://www.move.va.gov/MOVE/GetStarted.asp">https://www.move.va.gov/MOVE/GetStarted.asp</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>

**Comprehensive list of Veteran specific resources for tobacco cessation**  
[Organizations Serving Military Service Members and Veterans](#) | [Partners](#) | [Tips From Former Smokers](#) | [CDC](#)