Identifying Opportunities for Improvement in a Program Designed to Address Tobacco-related Disparities in Rural Communities

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Overview

• Learning Outcomes

• Background/Objectives

• Challenges to providing services in rural communities

• Developing a Rural Health Plan

• Preliminary Findings

• Addressing Barriers/Adapting the Rural Health Plan

• Conclusions
Learning Outcomes

• Identify the risk factors and challenges to providing tobacco cessation services in a rural community.

• Describe how to adapt traditional tobacco cessation programming to meet the needs of rural communities and their most vulnerable populations. Challenges to providing services in rural communities
Background/Objective

• North Central PA is primarily comprised of rural communities but suffers from high rates of tobacco use
Challenges to providing service in rural communities

- Geographic Isolation and Transportation Barriers
- Lower Socio- Economic Status and Education Level
- Higher Rates of Health Risk Behaviors
Goal 1: Prevent the initiation of tobacco use among young people

- Tobacco Resistance Unit – TRU
- Enforcement – Act 112, FDA, Synar
Program Tasks

Goal 2: Promote quitting among adults and young people

- Promote the Quitline
- In-Person Cessation
- Online Cessation
- Youth Cessation
Program Tasks

Goal 3: Eliminate non-smokers’ exposure to secondhand smoke

- Worksite Policy
- Multiunit Housing Policy
- Young Lungs at Play
Goal 4: Identify and eliminate tobacco-related health disparities

- Key populations: Rural, Low SES, Hispanic/Latino, LGBTQ

- Partnered with local service providers, rural health clinics, FQHCs, Hispanic/Latino, and LGBTQ serving organizations to provide tobacco prevention and control services.
Developing a Rural Health Plan

This plan prioritizes:

Using targeted social media campaigns as the primary form of outreach to promote program services, including Freedom From Smoking Plus, no-cost nicotine replacement therapy, and the Pennsylvania Free Quitline.
Developing a Rural Health Plan

Offering a no cost online cessation program called Freedom From Smoking Plus
Evaluation

- Tracking promotional activities
- Quitline Promotion
- Freedom From Smoking Plus Promotion
Preliminary Findings

• Online cessation programming now represents over 40 percent of the region’s clients

• Promotional activities have triggered interest from someone in every county in the region

• Facebook the number one promotional tool
Addressing Barriers/Adapting the Rural Health Plan

• Lung Association will complete interest surveys with participants that they interact with on the spot

• Additional materials were created to assist in FFS+ enrollment

• Incentives will be used to entice individuals
Conclusions

• Traditional methods of providing services must be adapted and continually evaluated to enable informed program modifications. This will ensure that rural communities, and their most vulnerable populations, receive the services they need.

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Thank You!

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