



State of North Carolina

With the assistance of North Carolina Prevention Partners (NCP), all 125 North Carolina hospitals have been successful in enacting tobacco-free campus policies. In 2009, NCP, working in partnership with the North Carolina Hospital Association, expanded the focus of the hospital tobacco-free program to support patient cessation. Hospital CEO's are asked to sign an Executive Commitment to Establishing a Corporate Culture of Wellness, a contract created by NCP to promote high level support for the initiative. The CEO identifies key hospital leaders for NCP to work with on tobacco cessation, nutrition, and physical activity. Hospital wellness status is assessed through utilization of the web-based executive level planning tool, WorkHealthy AmericaSM. Twenty-six North Carolina hospitals have earned the Gold Star status, having achieved all five key components of a comprehensive tobacco cessation system approach.

Working with national tobacco cessation experts, NCP developed an executive-level planning tool, the Patient Quit-Tobacco System (PQTS). This tool assists hospital leaders in assessing, implementing, and evaluating efforts to support patient cessation. Upon completion of the assessment, the tool generates a grade, customized executive level recommendations, and an action plan. Participating hospitals have access to a resource toolbox including sample policies, case studies, and materials to enhance their system approach to patient cessation. The Patient Quit-Tobacco System is aligned with the new Joint Commission Measure Set for Tobacco Screening and Follow Up and with Meaningful Use.

FirstHealth of the Carolinas is a hospital system consisting of three acute care hospitals and serving the central part of North Carolina. FirstHealth led North Carolina hospitals in adopting a tobacco-free campus policy so NCP invited FirstHealth to serve as a Center of Excellence, assisting other hospitals in adopting wellness policies, environments, and benefits. The following describes their efforts to assist patients in quitting the use of tobacco.

- **ASK** – As part of the nursing assessment, all patients are asked if they have used any tobacco products in the last 12 months. This is a set protocol across all hospital units.
- **ADVISE** – Tobacco-using patients are advised to quit by their physician, other members of the healthcare team, and by the FirstQuit staff, an in-house program with Tobacco Treatment Specialists.
- **ASSESS** – Physicians can request a tobacco cessation consult from the FirstQuit in-house program. All FirstQuit staff members are certified Tobacco Treatment Specialists by the Mayo Clinic or University of Massachusetts. Patient education and assessment materials are offered, such as NCP's Starting the Conversation on Tobacco tool. These materials are located in all patient rooms.

- **ASSIST**- The FirstQuit staff provides a bedside intervention to patients, along with family members, while in the hospital and recommends medications, when not contraindicated. The consultation and recommendations are recorded in the patient's electronic medical record for review by the health care team.
- **ARRANGE** – Patients are encouraged to enroll with the Quitline and, when possible, the first call is made by the patient during their appointment, in addition to enrolling with the FirstQuit outpatient program.

NCPP is working with the state Quitline to enable bi-directional electronic communication that will allow hospital staff to “e-refer” patients to the Quitline. Quitline staff would then follow up with discharged patients and send data electronically to the hospital patient record, along with an e-mail to the provider.

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