

Quitline Iowa Fields Thousands of Calls

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DENVER — Nearly 2,500 Iowans called Quitline Iowa during the first week that National Jewish Medical and Research Center operated the state's tobacco quitline. Iowa is the fifth state to contract with National Jewish for quitline services since National Jewish began its tobacco-cessation program in 2002. National Jewish now operates quitlines for the states of Iowa, Colorado, Ohio, Montana, and Idaho, and health plans in three different states. The program has grown from five tobacco-cessation coaches in 2002 to more than 80 today.

"This has been a great launch for Quitline Iowa," said David Tinkelman, MD, Vice President of Health Initiatives at National Jewish. "We are proud to help Iowans kick the tobacco habit and improve their health. Their enthusiastic response has exceeded our expectations."

An estimated 20 percent of Iowa's three million residents smoke. The previous Quitline provider, the University of Iowa, reached approximately 700 callers per month. The National Jewish Tobacco Quitline program is expecting an increase in callers to an estimated 1,600 per month, due in large part to offering free nicotine-replacement therapy. National Jewish assumed operation of Quitline Iowa on January 1, 2008, and processed more than 1,800 orders for Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) in the first week. National Jewish will add at least 10 Quitline staff to handle the addition of services to Iowa.

The National Jewish Tobacco Quitline is a telephonic program available to individuals who are ready to quit or just thinking about it. Each caller can choose to receive self-guided cessation information, or to enroll in an intensive telephone-counseling program delivered by highly trained National Jewish coaches. The intensive one-on-one program offers quit plans customized for each participant, up to five proactive coaching sessions, unlimited telephonic support and free nicotine replacement therapy. Information and coaching are available in English and Spanish.

Only three to five percent of people trying to quit tobacco on their own are successful, but over 30% of callers reported being tobacco-free 12 months after enrolling in the Quitline.

"Quitline has been an extremely effective smoking cessation program that has provided an excellent return on investment," said David Tinkelman, MD, Vice President of Health Initiatives. The savings related to reduced healthcare spending and increased productivity at work far exceed all costs related to operating these programs."

The program has expanded every year of its existence. Beginning in Colorado in 2002, National Jewish has added a new Quitline each year. The five Quitlines now serve states with a combined population of more than 21 million people.

National Jewish Health is the leading respiratory hospital in the nation. Founded 123 years ago as a nonprofit hospital, National Jewish Health today is the only facility in the world dedicated exclusively to groundbreaking medical research and treatment of patients with respiratory, cardiac, immune and related disorders. Patients and families come to National Jewish Health from around the world to receive cutting-edge, comprehensive, coordinated care. To learn more, visit the media resources page.

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