



QUITLINE IOWA

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# Quitline Iowa Fax Referral Program

## **Quitline Iowa Fax Referral Program**

This program is designed to help improve the health and well-being of Iowans by helping smokers quit and remain smoke free by increasing the number of individuals who receive smoking cessation counseling. Health care providers can play a crucial role in this effort by referring their patients who use tobacco to Quitline Iowa, a statewide, toll-free telephone counseling service. The fax referral program gives health care practitioners a quick and easy method for referring their patients who smoke to effective cessation services. After identifying a patient's tobacco-use status, providers can have patients fill out a simple form indicating their consent to receive cessation services, then fax the form to Quitline Iowa for cessation counseling and follow-up.

## **Why Quitline Iowa?**

Numerous studies have shown that enrolling in tobacco cessation coaching through telephone quitlines can more than double the chances of quitting successfully.

Quitline Iowa provides evidence-based, culturally competent smoking cessation services to all Iowans. The Quitline a high smoking cessation success rate, with a six month quit rate of 22.4% in 2006. Quitline will screen the client and then create a custom quit plan. Then they will follow-up with a total of eight coaching sessions.

## **How Do Health Care Providers Benefit?**

The Agency for Health Care Policy and Research (AHCPR) guidelines for clinicians recommend that health care providers assess a patient's smoking status and provide cessation assistance using the AAR approach—ask, advise, refer. However, limited time and resources, as well as lack of information on available community services may pose barriers to health care provider's ability to provide smoking cessation assistance. The fax referral program provides health care providers with an opportunity to outsource the time-consuming of providing cessation coaching to a telephone smoking cessation service, which would alleviate some of the problems posed by lack of time and resources.

## **Why Fax Referral?**

Research indicates that physician referral of patients to smoking cessation programs is associated with a significantly higher participation rate than simply telling patients they should stop smoking. Using the fax referral form to refer patients to Quitline Iowa for smoking cessation coaching provides health care providers with a quick and easy way to direct their patients to make an attempt to quit smoking.

Fax referral also will relieve the patients of the responsibility of initiating services, as Quitline Iowa will make the initial contact after receive the fax referral form. Such proactive counseling may increase participation rates, as patients will not have the difficult step of making the first call. Providers receive three follow-up faxes: the first to confirm receipt of the fax referral, a second when the client enrolls in the programs, and a final when the client completes all eight coaching sessions.