



Tobacco Cessation Treatment – Saving Money and Improving Employee Health

Tobacco cessation saves lives, improves health and reduces health care costs. Employees who smoke have higher absenteeism rates, lower productivity and higher health care use. The good news: within one year of quitting, a former smoker's overall health improves, productivity increases and a trend towards lower health care costs begins.

Tobacco cessation treatment is one of the most “cost-saving” benefits an employer can provide to its employees.^{1, 2} In other words, tobacco cessation treatment returns more in health care and other savings over time than the cost of delivering it.

TOBACCO USE COSTS EMPLOYERS

- The CDC estimates that companies spend \$3,856 per smoker per year in direct medical costs and lost productivity.³
- Smokers who successfully stop smoking reduce potential medical costs associated with cardiovascular disease alone by about \$47 during the first year and by about \$853 during the following 7 years.⁴
- On average, smokers miss 6.16 days of work per year due to illness (including acute and chronic conditions), compared to non-smokers who miss 3.86 days of work per year.⁵
- Employees who take four 10-minute breaks a day actually work one month less per year than workers who do not take smoking breaks.⁶
- Businesses pay an average of \$2,289 in workers' compensation costs for smokers, compared with \$176 for nonsmokers.⁷

EFFECTIVE CESSATION TREATMENTS

- Face-to-face counseling and interactive telephone (quitline) counseling are more effective than providing educational and self-help materials.⁸
- Tobacco users who receive quitline counseling are 60 percent more likely to quit than tobacco users quitting on their own.⁹
- Smokers who receive quitline counseling and take cessation medications are 30 percent more likely to quit compared to those only using cessation medications.⁹
- Health insurance coverage of medication and counseling increases the use of effective treatments.⁹

TOBACCO CESSATION TREATMENTS ARE COST-EFFECTIVE and COST-SAVING

- Studies have shown that tobacco treatment is more cost-effective than other common and covered prevention interventions, such as the treatment of hypertension and high blood cholesterol.¹⁰
- Cost analyses have shown that tobacco cessation benefits, from an employer's perspective, are cost-saving.²

RETURN-ON-INVESTMENT (ROI)

- The ROI for an employer is based on savings from reduced medical expenses, productivity loss, and costs of employer-provided benefits, such as life insurance.
- Research finds the ROI for tobacco cessation treatments is positive after just one year due to increases in employee productivity alone.¹¹
- Medical cost savings begin to build after two years of providing a cessation benefit to employees.¹¹

To access additional resources and tools, go to: <http://www.quitlinenc.com>

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