

# What program saves Vermont money and saves lives?

In 2014, Vermont signed into law a state government accountability program based on data-driven results. When evaluating whether to continue to fund a program, lawmakers were to ask three questions:

1. How much are we investing?
2. How well is the program performing?
3. Is anyone better off because of it?

## Vermont's investment in the Tobacco Control Program has provided evidence-based results

Vermont's historic investment in tobacco prevention has led to notable success, both in driving smoking rates down and in yielding concrete health care savings. This focused investment has led to reductions in tobacco use among adults and youth from a high of **24%** for adults and **40%** for youth 20 years ago to **17%** (adults) and **10.8%** (youth) today. Since 2001, along with strong smoke-free policies and significant tobacco taxes, the state has invested \$72 million in tobacco control and realized \$1.43 billion in health care savings. **Yet, over the last six years there has been a systematic reduction in funding, a complete zeroing out of the Tobacco Trust Fund and an expectation to do more with less.**



## Vermont Media campaigns drive 812 Vermonters to call Quitline in the last 2 months

According to the CDC, hard-hitting media campaigns like the *Tips* ads get results in motivating smokers to quit. From January to June of 2016, incoming calls to **802Quits**, Vermont's Quitline increased by **33%** with **1,858** calls made. In **January and February of 2017** alone, the new, targeted empathetic ad campaign and the *Tips* ads have resulted in another huge leap in calls to 802Quits with **812** calls made in a 2 month span.

802Quits provides phone, online and in-person (Quit Partner) tobacco treatment support. According to Fiore et al (2008), abstinence rates at one year are about 30% when quitting through a Quitline compared to 7% if quitting on your own.

"What a great program, I used [802Quits] a number of years ago and credit it with helping me to quit," said Chip Howard, March 5, 2017

No one knows the impact of media more than the tobacco industry, major tobacco companies now spend **\$9.1 billion** per year—nearly **\$25 million** every day—to promote their products, and many of their marketing efforts directly reach kids.—*Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids*

## How can Vermont continue to drive adult smoking rates down?

According to the CDC, if Vermont invested the minimum recommended amount of **\$1.1 million** into media and counter-marketing, the program could run an additional 6-8 adult cessation campaigns each year. The anticipated result of investing this funding would be lower adult prevalence from **17% to 15%**.

### Despite VT's success, now is not the time to cut funding for this vital program

*"Every day in my 30 years of caring for cancer patients I have seen patients with smoking related cancers, curable and non-curable, many who continue to smoke because the addictive power of nicotine is too powerful," said Dr. Daniel Fram, Medical Director, National Life Cancer Treatment Center at the Central Vermont Medical Center. "I am currently treating a woman in her 70's who is a former smoker with a lung cancer the diameter of a baseball. She is not a candidate for aggressive treatment due to her emphysema and heart disease (also smoking related).*

Average Annual Cost of Lung  
Cancer Treatment **\$60,533**  
National Institute of Health

Chronic disease is responsible for 57% of deaths in Vermont. Tobacco use leads to 40% of cancer diagnoses and one in three deaths from cardiovascular disease. Prevention of this deadly addiction is much less expensive than treating cancer and other chronic disease.



During Florida's well-funded youth prevention media campaign in 1998-2000, smoking by middle school students dropped a whopping **40%** and by high school students by **17.5%**. However, all of the funding for it was virtually eliminated in 2003, and by 2006 smoking rates for over 16 had **gone up by 21.2%**.



The program has successfully driven the youth smoking rate down to 10.8%, but with all of the new, candy-flavored tobacco products like e-cigarettes, **25%** of Vermont youth currently report using some form of tobacco.



Lawmakers have been struggling to control Vermont's Opiate crisis, but studies show smoking cessation interventions provided during addiction treatment were associated with a **25%** increased likelihood of long-term abstinence from alcohol and illicit drugs. Prochaska et al, 2004.



The rate of smoking among Medicaid recipients accounts for 41% of all smoking-related health care costs in VT. Yet, the program is making progress. Through targeted mailings with information on free counseling and medication through 802 Quits, there was a **55%** increase in quitline registrations among the state's Medicaid population.

Please support the Governor's recommended funding for this program.



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