Smoking Cessation in the Workplace:

A Guide to Helping Your Employees Stop Smoking

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Introduction

About this Guide

This guide was developed to assist you in moving forward with smoking cessation in your workplace. The guide will walk you through the steps and provide you with the tools to set up a smoking cessation program/supports for your workplace. Already have some supports in place? Great! Make use of what you have and use this guide to build/improve on what you are already providing to your employees. Along with steps and tools, this guide also provides some considerations or 'keys to success' as well as a list of resources which provide additional information around smoking cessation. The superscripts throughout the toolkit correspond to the references listed at the end of the toolkit.

So, let's begin with smoking cessation in the workplace and helping your employees to:



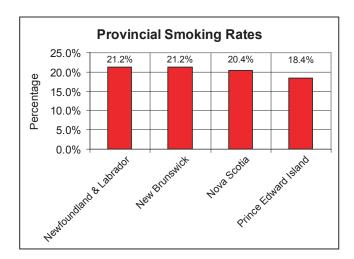
About Smoking in the Workplace

Smoking: It's Costing Your Company!

Employers incur substantial costs as a result of employee smoking. For example, it costs employers \$3,396 more to employ an employee who smokes¹. These costs are primarily attributed to:

- Decreased productivity
- Increased absenteeism
- Greater number of workdays lost due to illnesses provoked or aggravated by smoking
- · Unproductive time, such as smoke breaks
- · Higher insurance premiums

Overall, \$12.5 billion dollars of smoking related costs are indirectly incurred by Canadian employers². Employers benefit from supporting their employees for smoking cessation including increased productivity and reduced costs (e.g., fewer smoking breaks which add 40 minutes of productive work per smoker per day³). In the long-term, absenteeism decreases as the employee's health improves and employers will see increased productivity as ex-smoking employees are 5% more productive than current smoking employees⁴.

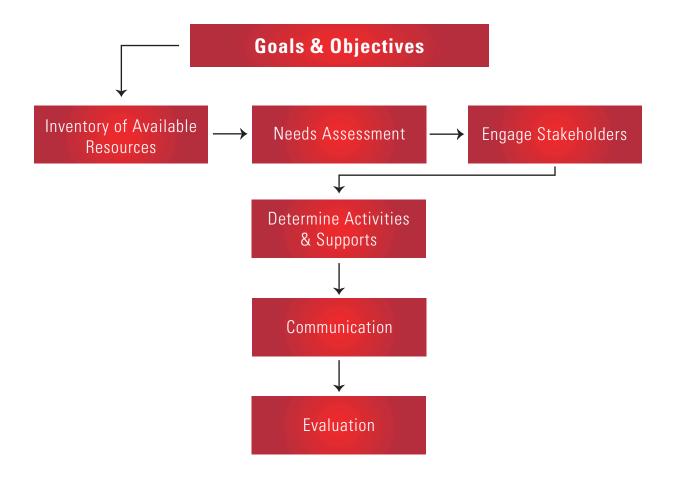


*The annual cost to Canadian employers due to smoking is \$3,396 per smoking employee, which is equal to an average of 8.7% of payroll 1.

^{*}Based on a mean salary in Canada of \$38,978, as reported by Statistics Canada, 2006.

How You Can Help Your Employees Stop Smoking

There are several things you can do as an employer to help your employees stop smoking. A comprehensive approach/supports are considered ideal and most effective in stopping employee smoking. The set-up of an effective comprehensive approach to smoking cessation in the workplace involves the following seven key steps³:



STEP 1: Goals & Objectives

What You Want to Achieve & Why

To start setting up supports or a program to support stop smoking in your workplace, goals and objectives should be established and clearly articulated³. The goals and objectives:

- Lay the foundation for program planning
- Should be shared and communicated to stakeholders to ensure there is a clear understanding of what the program/ supports are trying to achieve and why
- Help in evaluating (see Step 7) whether or not the program or supports have been successful (i.e., whether or not goals and objectives have been met)

Goal:

a broad statement about a long-term desired outcome (what do you hope to accomplish overall?)

Objective:

a measurable outcome that will be achieved in a specific timeframe to help accomplish a desired goal (what would you like to see happen?)

Your Goals and Objectives Should be SMART:

Specific: Be precise about what you are going to achieve

Measurable: Quantify the objectives

Appropriate: Align with the needs of the target audience

Realistic: Do you have the resources to make the objective happen?

Time-Specific: State when you will achieve the objective

Step 2: Inventory of Available Resources

What is Available to Support Your Employees?

Prior to determining which program/supports you should provide to your employees for smoking cessation, you should first develop an inventory of available internal and external resources^{3,5}.

This inventory may include:

Internal Resources Available

- Financial resources (e.g., program budget, cost of employee health benefits and opportunities for possible expansion of coverage, etc.)
- Human resources (e.g., personnel, time to allocate to program development, implementation and evaluation)

* External Resources Available

- · Regional/District Health Authorities Services. Public Health Addiction Services, community based support groups)
- Smokers' Helplines
- · Health Charities (e.g., Canadian Cancer Society, Lung Association, Heart & Stroke Foundation, etc.)

* Provincial Smokers' Helpline

Offers free: Telephone counselling, advice & support

Online support & counselling

Self help materials

Access to community links and supports

Nova Scotia 1-877-513-5333 www.smokershelpline.ca www.smokershelpline.ca

New Brunswick 1-877-513-5333 Newfoundland & Labrador 1-800-363-5864 www.smokershelp.net

Prince Edward Island 1-877-513-5333 www.smokershelpline.ca

^{*} Resources are available free of charge

STEP 3: Needs Assessment

What do Your Employees Want?

To ensure the program/supports effectively meet the needs of your employees, it is important to conduct a needs assessment. The information collected will help guide you in terms of which program or support to offer. A needs assessment may be conducted through a survey, focus group, or meeting/discussion with employees (if in a smaller work environment) and should gather the following information^{3,4,5,6}:

- How many employees are currently smoking or ex-smokers?
- Employees' motivation to stop smoking (Stages of Change see page 7)
- · Employees' wants and needs related to smoking cessation
- Preferred method/ desired supports for smoking cessation
- · Barriers preventing employees from smoking cessation

The following page provides a sample needs assessment survey which you can use to determine your employees' needs around smoking cessation.



Needs Assessment Tip!

It is sometimes tricky to get people to complete surveys. Providing anonymity on the survey may make some people more comfortable completing it.

Also, try offering an incentive (e.g., draw for a prize) to motivate employees to complete the survey³.

Sample Needs Assessment Survey

(Health Canada-adapted)

	l am: ☐ Male ☐ Female	7.	Would you participate in stop smoking supports/assistance offered through
	My age is: years Which of the following describes you heat?		our workplace? Yes
3.	Which of the following describes you best? I don't smoke		No. If no, why not?
F	→ End of survey, thank you! I smoke I am an ex-smoker How long ago did you stop smoking?	8.	What types of supports/activities would you use to help you stop smoking or help you remain smoke free?
4.	→ End of survey, thank you! Would you like to stop smoking?		(check all that apply)
	 □ People want me to stop, but I'm not interested □ I'm thinking about stopping, but not right now □ I'm ready to stop smoking, now! 		 □ Group program offered on site □ Group program offered off site □ Brief, professional advice □ One-on-one counselling
5.	Have you ever tried to stop smoking in the past? ☐ Yes ☐ No → Skip to question 7		 □ Stop smoking prescription medication □ Nicotine replacement therapy (e.g., nicotine gum, inhalers, patches) □ Telephone helplines (confidential)
6.	What have you used to try to stop smoking? ☐ Nothing ☐ Self-help materials ☐ Group support		 Contests/challenges to stop smoking Prescription smoking cessation medication coverage Information sessions Other:
	 □ Smokers' Helpline □ Doctor/pharmacist advice □ Nicotine replacement therapy (e.g., nicotine gum, inhalers, patches) □ Prescription/medication (e.g., Champix, Zyhan, etc.) 	9.	What would stop you from participating in stop smoking supports offered through our workplace? (e.g., cost, time, family members not being able to participate, etc.)

Thank you for your time in completing this survey!

This information will assist us in planning stop smoking activities

and supports for our workplace.

Stages of Change

A needs assessment should reveal the level of motivation or 'stage of change' your employees may be at for smoking cessation. It is important to realize that employees may be in one of five stages of the stop smoking process^{3,4}:

1. Pre-Contemplation

"People want me to quit, but I'm not thinking about quitting right now. I'm not completely convinced that smoking is a problem. Sometimes I think it's hopeless to even consider stopping smoking."

5. Maintenance

"I did it! I met my stop smoking goal. I realize its still going to take work to stay smoke free"



2. Contemplation

"I'm thinking about stopping smoking one of these days. I'd like to stop, I just need to figure out how to do it"

4. Action

"I'm stopping smoking. It's really tough going through nicotine withdrawal. I've slipped a few times and had a cigarette, but I'm sticking with my plan"

3. Preparation

"I'm almost ready to stop smoking, probably in a month or two. I want to come up with a plan and a cessation date"

Step 4: Engage Stakeholders

Providing a Voice to All Parties

Engagement of workplace stakeholders is a critical step in ensuring diverse perspectives are represented and concerns heard as well as to facilitate buy-in and support for the program^{3, 6-8}. Engagement of employees would begin with their participation in the needs assessment (see Step 3). Stakeholders should also be engaged throughout the planning, implementation and evaluation process to ensure the program responds to employee needs^{3,6,8}. In the workplace, stakeholders include (but are not limited to):

Human Resources



Employees including smokers, ex-smokers and non-smokers

Different departments or groups of employees

Representatives from workplace/occupational health and safety



Union
Representatives
(if applicable)

Management
Employee assistance program

It is recommended that a stop smoking program committee or working group be formed with representation from all stakeholders identified in your organization^{3, 5-7}. Input and engagement may also be achieved through health, safety and wellness committees which may already exist in the place of work⁸.

Step 5: Determine Activities & Supports

What Should / Can You Provide?

The development of a workplace smoking cessation program's activities and supports will be informed by the information gathered during Steps 2 through 4. Step 2 will determine the scope of what you can provide in terms of the program and its supports. Steps 3 and 4 will help determine what employees want and what is needed.

Workplace smoking cessation supports/programs may be categorized into three types³:

Comprehensive	- Considered ideal! Offering programs/activities at the
	workplace which may be accessed by employees

on-site and during work hours

Facilitated - Working with outside agencies to deliver programs/

activities off-site and providing self-help materials

Education - Providing employees with information including

self-help materials

The program should meet the needs of three potential types of smoking employees9:

Employees who are not ready to stop smoking

Needs include motivation through incentives/ disincentives, education, information and workplace policies

& Information

Employees who want to stop smoking

Needs include access to counselling, education and drug therapies, assistance in paying for treatment, and a supportive work environment and policies

Employees who have stopped smoking (ex-smokers)

Needs include follow-up support (to prevent relapse)



Stop Smoking Support Options

Туре	Your Options
Self-Help Materials Educational materials on the stop smoking process	 You can order and provide brochures, guides, websites, etc., for employees to take if interested Available through: Canadian Cancer Society (Quit Smoking Guides: One Step at a Time) Heart & Stroke Foundation (Just Breathe: Becoming and Remaining Smoke Free) Lung Association (How to Quit) Health Canada (On the Road to Quitting)
Free, confidential telephone support, tips, tools and advice from trained 'Quit Specialist'	Promote the Smokers' Helpline to employees (toll-free telephone numbers available in each province as well as new online support services available)
Individual or group counselling including regular sessions, a cessation date, supporting abstinence, dealing with relapse and providing follow-up to remain smoke free	 Bring a specialist (physician, nurse, addiction specialist, employee assistance program provider, Smokers' Helpline counsellor, etc.) to the workplace to provide counselling services on site. Link with local district/regional health services (e.g., Addiction Prevention and Treatment Services) to refer employees to and promote local services (e.g., 'Quit Smoking Support Groups', 'Coping with Quitting Groups')
Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRTs) The use of various nicotine delivery methods (e.g., patches, gum, lozenges, inhalers, etc.) to replace the nicotine obtained through smoking and ease/minimize withdrawal symptoms	 Provide free (e.g., through programs put on by local Regional/District Health Authorities, etc.) or subsidized/co-paid NRTs for program participants Improve health benefits coverage to include NRTs
Smoking Cessation Medications* Pharmacological non-nicotine treatments available by prescription to treat/aid nicotine addiction (e.g., Champix, Zyban)	Improve health benefits coverage to include smoking cessation medications, increase lifetime maximums, coverage for other family members, etc.

^{*}The use of smoking cessation aids should be discussed with your health care provider.

Support Adds Up to Success

Without support, smoking cessation is extremely challenging for employees¹⁰.



Only 2.5-5% of smokers who attempt to quit unaided will succeed

The provision of workplace support(s) will empower your employees to work towards reaching their cessation goals¹⁰.



Step 6: Communication

Communication is a key step once the workplace smoking cessation program and its supports have been established. The program needs to be effectively communicated to generate interest and encourage participation among employees^{3-5, 7}.

For example:

10 Reasons to Stop Smoking:

- 1. Better Health
- 2. Better Breathing
- 3. Personal Appearance
- 4. Role Model for Your Children
- 5. No More Second-Hand Smoke
- 6. Better Smell
- 7. Fewer Places to Smoke
- 8. Smoking is Expensive
- 9. Smoking is a Fire Hazard
- 10. It's Never Too Late To Quit Smoking

Join Us in an Information Session About Our New Stop Smoking Program.

Date: ______ Location:

Come and See How We Can Help You Help Yourself.

What's Your Reason?

Communication mechanisms should also be established for employees to comment and provide ongoing feedback regarding the program/supports^{3, 5}. If the program includes changes to the work environment (e.g., worksite smoking ban, changes in smoking areas, etc.) employees should be notified well in advance^{3, 6, 11}.

Communication Considerations 3, 12

Who are you trying to reach? Focus broadly initially, then focus on 'high risk' employees What is your message? 1) Help makes a difference, and 2) help is available When should you promote your program? Early and often Where do employees get information? Find out employees preferred places/mechanisms How to promote your program? Use multiple communication tools and mechanisms

STEP 7: Evaluation

Did you Meet Your Goals & Objectives

The final step in the process of setting up a workplace smoking cessation program/supports is evaluation^{3-6, 9}. Evaluation is a key step which is often overlooked, although it is important for gathering information around:

- The effectiveness of the program/supports provided
- The successes of the program/supports
- · Identifying challenges, areas of improvement and adaptations
- Providing justification for the continuation of the program/supports

It is beneficial to regularly evaluate the program/supports so that changes may be monitored over time. As the supports are provided, you may want to see if smoking rates among your workforce change (re-implement the needs assessment survey). Evaluation does not have to be complicated; a simple survey can serve as a form of evaluation to gather information about your program/supports. The following page provides a sample survey (for program participants) which you may use/adapt to evaluate your program/supports.

"If you don't measure results, you can't tell success from failure; If you can't see success, you can't learn from it; If you can't recognize failure, you can't correct it. "
- University of Wisconsin-Extension



Sample Stop Smoking Program/Support Evaluation Survey

1.	How did you hear about the program? (check all that apply)	7. Was the program offered through our workplace? (please check all that apply):
	 □ Flyer, poster, other promotional material □ Email □ Word of mouth (e.g., co-workers) □ Management □ Staff meeting □ Occupational health and safety 	 □ Informative □ Motivational □ Helpful □ Supportive □ Conveniently located □ Held at a good time
	nurse/health professional Other:	8. Which tools, techniques, resources or supports did you find useful? (Adapt to Your Program):
2.	What was your goal when you joined the group? Stop smoking Reduce smoking Get information Other:	 □ Group leader □ Breathing/relaxation techniques □ Positive self-talks □ Handouts/self help material □ Smokers' Helpline □ Group support/discussion
3.	Did your goal change as you went through the program? No Yes. If yes, how?	 □ Contests/incentives □ Buddy system/co-worker support □ Nicotine replacement therapy □ Prescription medications □ Other:
4.	Are you smoke free today?	9. What was/is your favourite part of the program?
	☐ Yes → Skip to question 7 ☐ No	Is there anything you would suggest adding or changing about the program?
5.	Why do you think you started smoking again/continue to smoke?	11. Was there anything else that you found helpful that was not part of the program?
6.	Will you continue to work at stopping smoking? ☐ Yes, today ☐ Yes within 1 month	12. How many sessions/supports did you attend or make use of?
	Yes, within 1 month Yes, within 6 months Yes, within 1 year	13. Would you recommend the program to your co-workers?
	□ No	14. Overall how would you rate our program? Poor Okay Good Very Good Excellent

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

Your feedback will help improve our stop smoking program/supports!

Keys to Success

Smoke-Free Policies

An ideal workplace stop smoking program is one that uses an integrated approach to create a supportive environment for stopping smoking. Workplaces that allow smoking, even in designated areas, send mixed messages whereas worksites that are 100% smoke free^{3, 8, 9}:

- Provide the supportive environment necessary for employees to stop smoking
- Decrease the temptation for smoking for ex-smoking employees
- Reduce second-hand smoke for non-smoking employees
- Help to shape social/workplace norms for smoke free environments

A sample policy is provided below and may be adapted to fit your workplace.

Smoke Free Policy for NAME of ORGANIZATION

Due to the health hazards from exposure to environmental tobacco smoke, it shall be the policy of NAME of ORGANIZATION to provide a smoke free environment for all its employees and visitors. This policy covers the smoking of any tobacco products and the use of smokeless or 'spit' tobacco and applies to both employees and non-employee visitors of NAME of ORGANIZATION.

- 1. There will be no smoking of tobacco products within the facilities at any time.

 Smoking is not permitted within 20 feet of the premise/property of ___NAME of ORGANIZATION
- 2. There will be no smoking in any NAME of ORGANIZATION vehicle at any time.
- 3. Employees will be informed of this policy through signs posted in NAME of ORGANIZATION facilities, premises and vehicles.
- 4. Visitors will be informed of this policy through signs and will be explained by their host.
- 5. NAME of ORGANIZATION will assist employees who wish to stop smoking by facilitating access to smoking cessation supports (describe program).
- 6. Any violations of this policy will be handled through the standard disciplinary procedure.

Supporting the Stop Smoking Process

Your stop smoking program/supports should reflect the cessation process³. The program/supports should^{3, 4, 9, 11}:

- · Avoid approaches that stigmatize smoking employees
- Recognize that smoking is an addiction to nicotine
- Recognize that smoking is a health issue, not a moral issue
- Acknowledge that smoking cessation is a difficult process
- Recognize that relapse is part of the cessation process (it takes an average 4-5 quit attempts for full cessation)
- Support each attempt to stop smoking that the employee makes
- Consider extending the cessation benefits, supports and activities to spouses/family members living with the employee



Subsidized Supports

A key success factor of a workplace smoking cessation program is subsidized stop smoking medications/aids³. The provision of stop smoking treatment coverage through employee health plans is estimated to cost 10-40 cents per member per month, with the savings exceeding the cost of the services within 3-5 years¹¹. Many health plans do not cover or do not optimally cover NRTs (as they are over the counter medications) or stop smoking medications; therefore, employers should⁷:

- Examine their employees' health plans
- Work to improve coverage such as increasing lifetime maximum, allow for multiple cessation attempts, etc.
- Provide NRTs directly as a self-funded benefit or provide re-imbursements for employees who use the products to quit as part of the workplace program.

How Do They Work?

NRTs

Deliver nicotine to the body to help deal with psychological and physiological withdrawal symptoms and cravings caused by the loss of nicotine from smoking cessation. NRTs also deliver nicotine to the smoker's brain slower than cigarettes do which helps to decrease the urges to smoke rather than cutting them off completely.

Medications (non-nicotine therapy)

Champix targets the nicotine receptors in the brain to reduce cravings and decreases the pleasurable effects of cigarettes. Zyban reduces a person's urge to smoke and lessens the symptoms of withdrawal and side effects of cessation (e.g., weight gain, etc.).



Additional Considerations

The program/supports you provide should align with what your workplace can feasibly support. When developing your program or deciding what type of supports to offer, consider the following facilitators to success³:

Location	Offer the program/supports on site and/or across multiple work sites.
Time	Offer the program/supports during work hours (not in lieu of normal work breaks).
Cost	Ideally, your program/supports should be provided at no cost to the employee to participate.
	Medications/nicotine replacement therapy should be subsidized.
Supports	Provide a range of supports to accommodate differing needs (e.g., Smokers' Helpline, one-on-one counselling, group counselling, medications, self-help, NRTs, etc.).
	Provide at least one support option for each stage of readiness to quit.

The following page provides a check list of considerations, the more 'yes' answers the stronger your program is!



Check List of Considerations

The following list outlines some considerations around the provision of stop smoking programs/supports. *Remember the more "YES" answers the better!*

Yes	No	Does/Is your program
		Offered at times that are convenient to your employees?
		Offered in a location that is convenient for your employees?
		Provided free of charge?
		Suit your employees' personalities and styles of learning?
		Informed by a needs assessment of employees?
		Have a working group/committee/ feedback or input mechanism?
		Recognize that not all people who smoke are at the same stage of the stop smoking process?
		Provide supports for employers at each stage of change?
		Provide support for the employee's immediate family members to support them in cessation?
		Help people deal with the physical addiction of smoking?
		Include stop smoking medication (NRTs, prescription, etc.) free of charge or through a health benefits plan?
		Help people deal with the psychological addiction of smoking?
		Help people deal with the social nature of smoking?
		Prepare smokers for a future without cigarettes?
		Reinforce the person's motivation to stop smoking?
		Provide tips to control the urge to smoke?
		Use any special support systems and other wellness activities in your workplace?
		Provide information about stress management, physical activity and nutrition?
		Offered by or associated with a credible organization/health care providers (e.g., Cancer Society, Lung Association, Smokers' Helpline, regional Addiction Prevention & Treatment Services)?
		Promoted and communicated through multiple mechanisms?
		Provide ongoing follow-up support?
		Evaluated and does it have a proven success rate based on a thorough follow-up?
		Provided along with a smoke free (on-site) policy?
Total	YES a	nswers

Resources



National Organizations & Groups

Canadian Cancer Society

Phone: (416) 961-7223 Email: ccs@cancer.ca Website: www.cancer.ca

Canadian Lung Association

Phone: (613) 569-6411 Email: info@lung.ca Website: www.lung.ca

Heart & Stroke Foundation of Canada

Phone: (613) 569-4361

Website: www.heartandstroke.com

Canadian Centre for Occupational Health & Safety

Phone: (905) 572-2981

Website: www.ccohs.ca/healthyworkplaces/topics/smokingcessation.html

Canadian Council for Tobacco Control

Phone: 1-800-267-5234 Email: infoservices@cctc.ca Website: www.cctc.ca

Health Canada — Quit Smoking

http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/tobac-tabac/quit-cesser/index-eng.php Tobacco Control Program (Atlantic Branch) — (902) 426-4051

Provincial Groups:

Nova Scotia Smokers' Helpline

1-877-513-5333

Website: www.smokershelpline.ca

Newfoundland and Labrador Smokers' Helpline

1-800-363-5864

Website: www.smokershelp.net

New Brunswick Smokers' Helpline

1-877-513-5333

Website: www.smokershelpline.ca

Prince Edward Island Smokers' Helpline

1-877-513-5333

Website: www.smokershelpline.ca

Other Resources

On the Road to Quitting

This guide for smokers who want to quit is available in booklet form and online. It includes information about nicotine addiction, the health benefits of quitting smoking and dealing with stress, and it outlines practical steps for quitting. Strategies for dealing with relapses, slips, cravings and withdrawal are also outlined.

Available at: www.gosmokefree.gc.ca

Towards a Healthier Workplace: A Guidebook on Tobacco Control Policies

This guidebook outlines the importance of workplace tobacco control policies and the practical steps for implementing them with case stories from workplaces across the country illustrating concrete examples. It also includes practical tools for employers and handouts for employees. Available at: www.gosmokefree.gc.ca

Workplace Health - Discovering the Needs

This guide was developed for use by committees or coordinating groups to plan a needs assessment for workplace health programs.

Available at: http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ewh-semt/pubs/occup-travail/health-sante/index-eng.php

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