

**New Mexico****Free Patches and Gum Help New Mexicans with Diabetes Kick the Habit****Public Health Problem**

People with diabetes who smoke are at increased risk for developing CVD caused by:

- Decreased amount of oxygen reaching the tissues
- Damaged and constricted blood vessels
- Increased blood pressure
- Decreased levels of high density lipid (good) cholesterol
- Increased risk of blood clots forming in damaged blood vessels
- Increased insulin resistance
- Increased blood sugar levels

People with diabetes who smoke are three times more likely to die from heart disease or stroke as people with diabetes who don't smoke. This is in addition to the already elevated risk of death from CVD for people with diabetes (about two to four times higher than people without diabetes). Smoking also increases the risk of other diabetes complications such as, kidney disease and failure, nerve damage, ulcers and infections that may lead to amputations and possible eye damage.

**Taking Action**

Because smoking increases the risk of cardiovascular and circulatory complications among people with diabetes, two New Mexico Department of Health Chronic Disease Bureau Programs collaborated on increasing access to tobacco cessation resources for people with diabetes. The DPCP Manager and the Tobacco Use Prevention and Control Program (TUPAC) Manager, Supervisor, Quitline Specialist, and Media Strategist met with the Medical Officer/Epidemiologist to discuss possible collaboration around this issue. Based on the serious complications smoking causes in people with diabetes, TUPAC recommended that they prioritize their nicotine replacement resources for people who call the Quitline to people with diabetes. TUPAC worked with the Quitline vendor, Free & Clear Inc. (F&C) to implement a protocol so people with diabetes were eligible to receive free nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) TUPAC and F&C created a special data report to track the number of people with diabetes who received NRT. DPCP arranged for the NM Medical Society to train community health workers/promoters on motivational interviewing for smoking cessation. DPCP distributed information and resources about the Quitline to primary care providers and members of the Diabetes Advisory Council. A TUPAC staff member also provided information at one of the DAC meetings. TUPAC disseminated a press release about the Quitline and free NRT for people with diabetes during Diabetes Month.

**Implications and Impact**

- Easier access to Quitline for all New Mexico residents, including those with diabetes and to free NRT
- Helped policymakers (legislators and Department of Health leadership) see the benefits of funding something like this. NRT is more tangible than some other prevention efforts.
- From December 2006 to June 2007, 341 people with diabetes registered with the Quitline. Almost 52 percent (176) of them received some form of free NRT (the majority requested the patch).