

**Progress on Achieving Texas Tobacco
Reduction Goals:
A Report to the 80th Legislature**



**Texas Department of State Health Services
Mental Health and Substance Abuse Division
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Achieving Texas Tobacco Reduction Goals

Texas Tobacco Prevention Initiative

Purpose

Article II of the General Appropriations Act, 2006-2007, biennium, 80th Legislature, specifies goals for the use of tobacco-cessation or reduction funds and requires that the Department of State Health Services (DSHS), legacy agency Texas Department of Health (TDH), report on the agency's progress towards achieving them. The goals specified in Rider 67 are:

- (i) In areas where the state funds tobacco cessation programs at a level of \$3.00 per capita, there should be a demonstrated reduction in underage use of cigarettes, snuff, and smokeless tobacco of 60 percent by the year 2010 by all Texans 22 years and younger.
- (ii) In areas where the state funds tobacco prevention and cessation programs at a level of \$3.00 per capita, the use of cigarettes, snuff and smokeless tobacco by all Texans 22 years and younger should be eliminated by the year 2018.

Background

FY 2000-2001 Activities

The 76th Legislature appropriated interest (\$9 million per year) from the \$200 million Permanent Endowment for Tobacco Education and Enforcement to the TDH to prevent tobacco use and promote cessation. Working with eight state university partners, TDH conducted a pilot study in eighteen East Texas communities to evaluate the effectiveness of various combinations and intensities of tobacco prevention programs. In Port Arthur, TDH and its local partners developed and implemented comprehensive programs at a cost of \$3.00 per capita. The per capita cost is calculated for the entire population of the community. The comprehensive program included school/community interventions (including implementation of CDC-recommended school curricula and targeted education efforts through minority community organizations), surveillance and evaluation (including surveys of tens of thousands of students in schools and adults via random dial phone surveys), enhanced law enforcement to reduce illegal sales to minors, intensive media campaigns targeted to youth and teens, and cessation programs (including up to three free sessions of telephone counseling by bilingual, trained counselors). In other communities, expenditures ranging from \$0.25 to \$2.50 per capita supported lower intensity combinations of the interventions (i.e., not comprehensive). These included a less intensive media campaign, and single-focus community, school, enforcement or cessation programs. For example, Lufkin only received support to improve law enforcement efforts while Texarkana only received support to implement the school curriculum and promote community activities. The comprehensive tobacco prevention program achieved significant results: a forty percent decline in usage among 6th and 7th graders and a significant increase in cessation among older youth and adults. The results from the communities with the less-intensive programs did not show a measurable reduction in tobacco usage among either adults or children.

FY 2002-2003 Activities

Additional funding appropriated by the 77th Legislature (a total of \$12.5 million per year) was used to expand the successful \$3.00 per capita comprehensive program, called the Texas Tobacco Prevention Initiative, beyond its original boundaries to include Harris, Fort Bend, Jefferson (Beaumont/Port Arthur) and Montgomery Counties. These counties account for approximately one-fifth of the Texas population. To implement these programs, TDH contracted with local health departments, Education Service Centers, law enforcement agencies, a media firm for the development of tobacco prevention and cessation messages, voluntary health organizations for telephone cessation counseling, and state institutions of higher education for evaluation studies.

FY 2004-2005 Activities

The 78th Legislature reduced funding for tobacco education and enforcement by more than 50% to approximately \$5.9 million per year. As a result of these budget reductions, in FY 2004-2005, the \$3.00 per capita comprehensive tobacco prevention program area was restricted to the Beaumont and Port Arthur area. Harris County, Fort Bend County, Montgomery County and other areas of the State continue to receive tobacco prevention interventions but they are not able to be maintained at comprehensive levels of \$3.00 per capita.

FY 2006-2007 Activities

The 79th Legislature reduced funding for tobacco education and enforcement by 10% to \$5.4 million per year. Because of budget reductions in FY 2006-2007, the \$3.00 per capita comprehensive tobacco prevention program area was restricted to Jefferson County. Currently only Beaumont/Port Arthur areas (Jefferson County) are receiving comprehensive tobacco prevention and cessation activities. The Texas Tobacco Prevention Initiative continues to contract in Jefferson County with local health departments, Education Service Centers, law enforcement agencies, a media firm that conducts a media campaign for tobacco prevention and cessation messages, voluntary health organizations for telephone cessation counseling, and state institutions of higher education for evaluation studies. Harris County, Fort Bend County, Montgomery County and other areas of the State continue to receive tobacco prevention interventions but they are not able to be maintained at comprehensive levels of \$3.00 per capita.

Evaluation

DSHS has conducted a number of surveys to evaluate the impact of the comprehensive tobacco prevention and control program on tobacco use. Surveys of more than 150,000 Texas youth enrolled in grades 6 to 12 have been conducted in regions where the comprehensive tobacco prevention program has been implemented since the program began. In addition, DSHS has conducted multiple telephone surveys of more than 27,000 Texas adults age 18 and older to determine tobacco-use rates. The data obtained through these surveys clearly show success in achieving the Rider 67 goals.

Reductions in Youth and Young Adult Tobacco Use

Current tobacco use among youth in grades 6-12 decreased from 35% to 21% (a 40% reduction) between 2000 and 2006 in Beaumont and Port Arthur where state funds at a level of \$3.00 per capita have been used to implement the comprehensive tobacco prevention program. (2006 Youth Tobacco Survey/Sentinel School Survey)

- If the current trends continue, a 60% decrease in current tobacco use among youth in grades 6-12 could be realized by 2009 in Beaumont and Port Arthur. This performance would exceed the 2010 legislative goal.

Current tobacco use among adults age 18-22 decreased from 35.7% to 26.6% (a 25.5% reduction) between 2000 and 2004 in Beaumont and Port Arthur where state funds at a level of \$3.00 per capital have been used to implement the comprehensive tobacco prevention program. (2004 Adult Tobacco Survey*)

- If the current trends continue, a 60% decrease in current tobacco use among adults ages 18-22 could be realized by 2010 in Beaumont and Port Arthur. This performance would meet the 2010 legislative goal.

*Data findings of the 2006 Adult Tobacco Survey will be available in February 2007.

Return on Investment Study

The Financial Returns from Community Investments in Tobacco Control Final Report released in June 2006 by the Center for Health Research Kaiser Permanente Northwest concluded that investing in comprehensive tobacco control efforts of the Texas Tobacco Prevention Initiative is a highly cost-effective use of resources that provides substantial net financial savings to Texas employers, health plans, and the State. The state contracted Kaiser Permanente to study the return on investment from reductions in adult smoking associated with \$3 per capita spending for comprehensive tobacco control programs in East Texas. The return on investment study showed that in 2003, the single year program costs of \$11.3 million (\$2.71 per capita) implementing comprehensive programming in Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery and Jefferson counties resulted in over 29,800 fewer adult smokers in 2003; and savings of over \$252 million in medical care costs and lost productivity.

Cigarette smoking is the number one cause of premature death and disability in the United States, and costs society over \$157 billion annually in medical care and health-related productivity (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2002). In Texas, smoking is responsible for 24,100 annual deaths and \$10.6 billion in excess medical care expenditures and lost productivity. The annual medical care costs of smoking are more than \$4.5 billion. The estimated \$6.1 billion in annual productivity losses are associated with death-related forgone lifetime earnings. The report purposes that a comprehensive sustaining tobacco prevention and control program through the state will have a long-term reduction in tobacco use. Outcomes from one year of spending of \$3.00 per capita (approximately \$68 million) for a statewide program would yield an estimated 163,600 fewer Texans who smoke statewide. After five years, the statewide comprehensive program would save over \$1.4 billion in total medical care and productivity costs, over \$1.0 billion in medical care expenditure savings, and over \$365 million in future productivity costs.

Recommendations

The above data demonstrate significant progress in achieving the legislated goals and indicate that DSHS is on track to meet the 2010 goals in the comprehensive program area. Further progress toward these goals depends on maintaining efforts at the same level of intensity.

Tobacco prevention and cessation programming that is comprehensive, sustained over time, and funded at \$3.00 per person will result in long-term reductions in tobacco use among Texans. Investing in a comprehensive tobacco control effort is a highly cost-effective use of resources. Research supports the value of strong prevention efforts targeted to youth. If a person does not start using tobacco by age 18, the likelihood of starting tobacco use after age 18 is dramatically decreased. The comprehensive strategy of tobacco prevention and control has been proven to lower the use of tobacco by minors and to assist youth and young adult tobacco users in quitting by providing appropriate services and a positive community environment that supports a tobacco-free life.

Expansion of the \$3.00 per capita comprehensive tobacco prevention program to other areas of Texas will require additional resources.