



STATE OF MARYLAND

DHMH PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Maryland Tobacco Quitline Supports Tobacco Users *May 31st is World No Tobacco Day*

Baltimore, MD (May 30, 2007) – Every year 6,800 of Maryland residents die from smoking-related illnesses, such as lung cancer, cardiovascular disease and respiratory disease, according to the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH). Yet 75 percent of all smokers in Maryland want to quit.

In recognition of World No Tobacco Day celebrated on May 31st, DHMH encourages Maryland tobacco users to call 1-800-QUIT NOW. This phone number connects callers to the Maryland Tobacco Quitline, a free counseling service designed to help state residents quit using tobacco products.

The focus of World No Tobacco Day, founded in 1987 and sponsored by the World Health Organization, is to draw global attention to the tobacco epidemic and the diseases and preventable deaths caused by tobacco products. “Smoke Free Environments” is this year’s theme.

“World No Tobacco Day is an ideal opportunity for Maryland residents to get help to quit their tobacco addiction,” said DHMH Secretary John M. Colmers. “Success that day can be the first step toward a tobacco-free life.”

The DHMH Maryland Tobacco Quitline was launched June 1, 2006. The user-friendly resource has received more than 8,000 total calls in the past year and at least 3,500 tobacco users have registered for services during this period.

Quitline callers speak to professionally-trained Quit Coaches, who help callers develop individualized quit plans, offer guidance and information on medications and send additional information by mail. Callers are also referred to local cessation resources. Quit Coaches have more than 90 hours of specialized training in tobacco dependence treatment and many are former smokers. Counseling is offered in English and Spanish. All services are free of charge.

Participants can call the Quitline as many times as needed, and the service is available seven days a week from 8:00 a.m. to midnight. For more information, click on www.smokingstopshere.com

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