

YEAR THE PROGRAM STARTED

2003

PARTNERS

*New York State Smokers' Quitline
Chautauqua County Tobacco Control Program
Steps to a Healthier New York
Southern Tier Healthcare System/Tobacco
Cessation
University of Pittsburg Smoking Cessation:
Practical Skills for Healthcare
Professionals
Brooks Memorial Hospital's administration,
management, nursing staff, medical
staff, wellness committee, and employee
health department*

CONTACT

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TOBACCO FREE IS THE WAY TO BE!

Brooks Memorial Hospital

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND GOALS

The Tobacco Free is the Way to Be! program is part of Brooks Memorial Hospital's goal to promote health and wellness for its inpatients, outpatients, employees, and community members. Tobacco Free is the Way to Be! began in 2003 when hospitalized patients diagnosed with acute myocardial infarction, congestive heart failure, or pneumonia were screened for a history of tobacco use and were educated on tobacco cessation prior to discharge. The education consisted of an informational packet and one-on-one intervention. Realizing this intervention needed to be offered to the entire tobacco-dependent population, the tobacco use screening was expanded to include all hospitalized patients regardless of diagnosis. In 2006, the program was expanded to provide smoking cessation programs to hospital employees, their family members, and community members.

Through grant funds from Southern Tier Healthcare System, the hospital was able to print weekly educational advertisements in the local newspaper. The advertisements contained information on the risks of smoking and the benefits of quitting, and informed the community of the facility's move to a smoke-free campus in January 2007. An outside banner and permanent signage were placed around the facility. The Chautauqua County Tobacco Control Program provided additional education, materials, and nicotine replacement therapy.

OUTCOMES

The facility's rate for tobacco cessation intervention went from 51% in 2003 to 87% in 2007. The goal is to continue this upward trend to reach and sustain 100%. From August 2006 to January 2008, 164 referrals were made to the New York State Smokers' Quitline, in addition to providing initial counseling for each referral. Brooks Memorial Hospital became the first smoke-free campus in Chautauqua County on January 1, 2007.

LESSONS LEARNED

Tobacco use is a difficult behavior to change. Individuals are aware of the negative effects of tobacco use and know cessation is beneficial. Despite this knowledge, quitting is very challenging. Counselors can feel frustrated and ineffective when they provide instruction to individuals, but still observe those individuals using tobacco. The counselors take heart in knowing that although not all attempts are successful, every attempt brings the individual closer to becoming tobacco-free.

ABILITY TO SUSTAIN THE INITIATIVE

All patients continue to be screened for tobacco use, with positive screens receiving the two-minute intervention with a smoking cessation informational packet. People expressing an immediate desire to quit are seen by a smoking cessation counselor, and a referral is generated to the New York State Smokers' Quitline. Employees are continuously offered smoking cessation materials and the opportunity to receive counseling and nicotine replacement therapy. Additionally, counselors attend a vast array of community events/wellness fairs.