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For Immediate Release

Holiday Season an Opportunity for Tobacco-Free Living

[Jackson, MI] The holiday season has arrived, and there is no better time for people to adopt a healthy, tobacco-free lifestyle.

During the holidays, people often gather with family and friends. This is an opportunity to encourage and support tobacco users in their effort to quit. Making sure that your home is smoke-free protects friends and family, including children, pregnant women, the elderly, and those living with disabilities from the health harms caused by secondhand smoke. Parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles and friends have the opportunity to impact the children in their lives by setting an example of a tobacco-free lifestyle and reminding them that the use of tobacco, including cigarettes, e-cigarettes and other tobacco products is harmful.

According to the American Cancer Society, the benefits of quitting smoking are immediate. Within 20 minutes blood pressure drops, and within 24 hours a person's chance of heart attack decreases. The benefits continue for years, including reduced risk of lung cancer, stroke, and heart disease.

"Quitting tobacco can be challenging because nicotine is a highly addictive drug. Whether a person chooses to quit during the holiday season, or as a New Year's resolution, there are resources available to help and we want to provide the information," stated Rhonda Rudolph, Coordinator of the Jackson Tobacco Reduction Coalition.

Research shows that while quitting is difficult for most tobacco users, people who use tobacco can increase their success in quitting with help. Quitters are most successful when using a combination of therapies, including resources such as nicotine replacement, counseling, self-help materials, and a strong support network of family and friends.

The Michigan Tobacco Quitline is an evidence-based service that continues to provide free telephone coaching for the uninsured, pregnant women, residents enrolled in Medicaid and Medicare, veterans, cancer patients, and American Indians, as well as free nicotine replacement therapy to those who qualify. The Quitline provides services including materials, text messaging, an online program, and referral to all Michigan residents.

Providers can refer their patients and clients to the Quitline, and individual tobacco users can contact the Quitline directly at 1-800-784-8669, or enroll online at <https://michigan.quitlogix.org/>. More information, including a fax referral form for providers, is available at the website. Staff and providers in all health care settings can refer patients and clients to the Michigan Tobacco Quitline.

The following Jackson County based agencies/organizations provide smoking cessation services, programs, education, or resources to assist people in quitting.

- Center for Family Health - (517) 748-5500
- Henry Ford Allegiance Tobacco Treatment Services - (517) 205-7444
- Jackson County Health Department – (517) 768-2131
- Jackson County Substance Abuse Coalition – (517) 205-7425
- LifeWays Community Mental Health Agency – (517) 780-3380
- Unified Tobacco Reduction Services – (517) 780-3262
- Recovery Technology – (517) 787-6907
- Seventh Day Adventist Community Services – (517) 784-4538

In addition, the National Cancer Institute offers free resources and advice on making a quit plan that can help with quitting smoking. These resources are available at www.smokefree.gov.

Tobacco use kills 16,200 Michigan residents and costs the state over \$4.5 billion in smoking-related healthcare costs annually. Up to 5,200 kids in Michigan become new, regular smokers each year. The CDC recommends that Michigan spend \$110 million on tobacco prevention and control programming. Michigan spends just \$1.6 million. In contrast, the tobacco industry spends an estimated \$295 million to market their products in Michigan each year.

"The holidays can be a stressful time, but smoking doesn't have to be a part of them," said Richard J. Thoun, Health Officer. "Calling the Michigan Tobacco Quitline now can help people make the holidays, and 2018, tobacco-free. Quitting tobacco today will lead to a lifetime of health benefits."

For more information, please contact the Jackson Tobacco Reduction Coalition at (517)768-2131 or call the Michigan Tobacco Quitline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669).

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