

Verona's Piper takes part in stop-smoking panel

Verona resident Megan Piper was part of a national team of tobacco-treatment experts who worked on and just released a new set of guidelines to help smokers quit.

At an event held in May at the headquarters of the American Medical Association (AMA) in Chicago, speakers such as former U.S. Surgeon General C. Everett Koop and AMA president Ron Davis heralded the guidelines as a way to make a difference in the lives of smokers and their families.

Piper is a scientist for the University of Wisconsin Center for Tobacco Research and Intervention (UW-CTRI). The federal government contracted with UW-CTRI to produce the U.S. Public Health Service 2008 Clinical Practice Guideline Update: "Treating Tobacco Use and Dependence," which urges clinicians and other healthcare providers to seize the opportunity when they see patients who smoke. They can offer coaching and medications that increase the likelihood of quitting success.

The Guideline Update also recommends coaching over the phone, a service offered by the Wisconsin Tobacco Quit Line at (800) QUIT-NOW. Callers can get confidential coaching and two weeks of medication at no cost.

"Dr. Piper's contributions to this vitally important document cannot be overstated," said Dr. Michael Fiore, the chair of the guideline update panel and director of UW-CTRI, in a press release. "The Guideline Update has enormous influence over how doctors and others treat their patients. This new document is based on more than 8,700 research articles published between 1975 and 2007. It offers the latest evidence-based treatments to help people overcome the very strong addiction nicotine represents."