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Healthcare Summit Offers New Recommendations to Combat State's Leading Cause of Preventable Death

(MENASHA) – Wisconsin's own Dr. Michael Fiore, chair of the U.S. Public Health Service panel that created the new guidelines on how to quit tobacco use, today spoke to healthcare leaders at UW Health Fox Valley in Menasha about how clinics and healthcare systems can make a dent in the state's leading cause of preventable death.

"More than 8,000 Wisconsin residents die from tobacco use every year," Fiore said. "That's half the population of Menasha. If 80 airplanes crashed in Wisconsin every year we'd be outraged. Yet many people aren't outraged by the same number of smoking deaths. There's an old saying: 'When 1,000 people die it's a statistic. When one person dies, it's a tragedy.' I'm here because I lost my dear Uncle Anthony to smoking last year, and I don't want it to happen to other patients."

New Recommendations

Fiore spoke to doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals attending the event about new recommendations to help patients quit smoking, including:

- ☑ The combination of counseling and medication is significantly more effective than either alone. When at all practical, both should be provided. However, medication should not be used when contraindicated—and should not be advised for pregnant women, light smokers, adolescent smokers or smokeless tobacco users. Otherwise, the pairing should be routinely offered to patients trying to quit.
- ☑ Quit Line counseling is effective with diverse populations and has broad reach. Wisconsin Tobacco Quit Line callers on average are four times more likely to quit tobacco use than those who attempt to quit without treatment. The number for the Quit Line is 1-800-QUIT-NOW. It offers free, confidential quit-coaching and free medication.
- ☑ This Guideline Update includes information on nicotine lozenges and varenicline. Seven medications are now approved by the FDA as safe and effective for tobacco-dependence treatment.
- ☑ Researchers have shown certain medicinal combinations to be especially effective:
 - Nicotine patch + other nicotine replacement therapy (nicotine gum, spray or inhaler).
 - Nicotine patch + bupropion SR.

The guidelines are endorsed by more than 50 organizations, including the American Medical Association, American Psychiatric Nurses Association, American Cancer Society and American Lung Association. The panel reviewed more than 8,700 articles from medical journals published during the last 17 years. For more information, visit <http://www.ctri.wisc.edu>.