

UW-CTRI News Release

Center for Tobacco Research and Intervention, UW School of Medicine and Public Health

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\$9 Million Stop-Smoking Federal Grant Headed to Wisconsin

The director of the University of Wisconsin Center for Tobacco Research and Intervention (UW-CTRI) today announced a new \$9-million federal grant to discover the best ways to help people successfully stop smoking. The grant announcement comes on a day when the Centers for Disease Control released new figures showing the number of adults who smoke has increased to 20.6 percent nationally. The previous smoking rate had been 19.8 percent nationally, and 19.6 percent in Wisconsin.

"It is an honor to receive this highly competitive federal award that will make such a difference in the lives of Wisconsin families touched by tobacco addiction," said Dr. Michael Fiore, UW-CTRI director. "We know that most smokers want to quit, but so many struggle with this addiction. This new federal study is designed to meet smokers where they are in terms of their willingness to try quitting. The goal is to create the greatest likelihood for smokers to successfully overcome tobacco addiction."

Fiore continued, "We are undertaking this important work just as we learned of an uptick in the number of adult smokers in our country. This new statistic emphasizes that we need to do more to help smokers quit."

The National Cancer Institute, part of the National Institutes of Health, is funding the grant for five years, adding millions to Wisconsin's economy.

This study will provide both quit-coaching and nicotine medications in real-world Wisconsin clinics that use electronic medical records (EMR). Healthcare is increasing its use of such EMR systems that are also a cornerstone of President Obama's stimulus package funding. This Wisconsin research will have a far-reaching impact on smokers close to home and across the country.

UW-CTRI will work with Epic Systems Corp., a medical software company based in Dane County, and UW Health. Other collaborators include Aurora Health Care, Dean Health System and Mercy Health System.

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“At the end of the research, we will have a menu of stop-smoking treatments that a clinic can offer virtually any smoker who walks through the door,” said Dr. Timothy Baker, UW-CTRI’s director of research who will lead the study with Fiore. “We want to help healthcare systems expand their capacity to better treat smokers. It will be a model that creates a team of healthcare professionals supporting the smoker. The team will rely on integrated clinical health technology systems that assist tobacco users to be smokefree.”

Beginning in spring 2010, UW-CTRI researchers will recruit 2,300 smokers who will participate in the study for a full year. Participants will be recruited from clinics across south-central and southeastern Wisconsin. The research includes three projects:

- Project 1: The focus is on a smoker’s motivation to quit. The project targets smokers who express an interest in quitting but aren’t ready to try now. The goal is to encourage them to think about quitting, using a coaching strategy called motivational interviewing.
- Project 2: This project will test new combinations of coaching and nicotine-replacement medication treatments for smokers who want to quit. Past research has shown that using coaching and medications together can boost the chances of successfully quitting by up to four times.
- Project 3: This project will determine how much “taking medication properly” determines success during a quit attempt. Smokers who adhere to stop-smoking medication instructions may fare better in their quit attempts.

“UW-CTRI has received two previous large, long-term federal grants to study smoking treatments. The first was in 1999 and the second in 2004. I am pleased UW-CTRI can continue to build on its excellent record of accomplishments,” said Dean Robert Golden of the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health. “It is a testament to the exemplary reputation the center has accumulated in its 17-year history. The NIH grant will improve public health in Wisconsin, nationally and across the globe since tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death, regardless of geographic and socio-economic boundaries.”

“This research grant is designed to drive down the adult smoking rate, saving lives and saving dollars at a time when our nation’s economy could particularly benefit from reduced healthcare costs,” Fiore said.

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Collaborators at the University of Illinois at Chicago and Penn State will also participate in the research.

UW-CTRI is a nationally recognized research center founded in 1992 and is committed to determining the nature of tobacco dependence and developing evidence-based treatments to assist smokers. For more information, visit www.ctri.wisc.edu. The Center is a part of the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health.

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