
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Health Services
BC Lung Association

WANT TO QUIT SMOKING IN 2011?

VICTORIA – Is quitting smoking one of your resolutions for the New Year? Try registering with QuitNow to increase your chances of successfully quitting.

QuitNow Services offer British Columbian smokers a confidential helpline (1 877 455-2233) with information available in 130 languages and an online quit community where professional and peer support is available 24/7. As well, quitters can sign up for email quit tips and text, join QuitNow’s Twitter and Facebook page and explore interactive quit tools and resources at: www.quitnow.ca

According to the Canadian Tobacco Use Monitoring Survey 2009 data, 14.9 per cent – or approximately 550,000 British Columbians – continue to smoke. The BC Stats Tobacco Attitudes and Behaviours Survey Report 2008 shows that, at any time, about 70 per cent of smokers wish to quit.

“When you are ready to quit smoking, our government has the programs to help you succeed,” said Parliamentary Secretary for Health Promotion, Terry Lake. “QuitNow supports you in getting your health back, and in dropping the expensive tobacco habit.”

“Each smoker is unique,” said Jack Boomer, director of QuitNow Services with the BC Lung Association. “Our overall objective is to provide smokers with tools proven to increase smokers’ chances of quit success.”

“I quit smoking more than six weeks ago, with a lot of willpower of my own and support from QuitNow,” said Eryn Collins, communications officer with Northern Health. “For the first Christmas in a long time, I didn’t miss a moment by standing outside in the cold.”

Why QuitNow Services?

- There are more than half a million cigarette smokers in British Columbia.
- Seventy per cent would like to quit in the next 12 months.
- For many smokers, willpower alone is not enough to release nicotine’s powerful hold.
- Studies have found smokers increase their chances of successfully stopping smoking by 20 to 70 per cent by getting quit-smoking support counselling.
- Most smokers are not aware of the powerful tools available to help them quit.
- Smoking is linked to virtually all the major causes of death and disease in Canada.
- Approximately 37,000 Canadians are expected to die this year from tobacco-related causes, including more than 1,000 from second-hand smoke.

As an incentive to quit, B.C. smokers can sign up to participate in the QuitNow and WIN contest, which features cash prizes of more than \$20,000. Contest registration is open until Jan. 7, 2011 at 11:59 pm. To be eligible for prizes during the contest period, participants must commit to remain tobacco free from Jan. 8 through to Feb. 4, 2011.

QuitNow is supported by grant funding from the Province of British Columbia and organized by the BC Lung Association.

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