

Recently, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) launched a “Talk with Your Doctor” initiative as part of its TIPS From Former Smokers campaign.

The initiative encourages health care providers to use the TIPS campaign to begin a dialogue with patients about smoking and quitting and empowers patients to address the issue with their doctor.

“In Nebraska, we’ve long recognized the vital role that doctors and health care providers play in helping their patients successfully quit smoking and other tobacco use,” said Joseph M. Acierno, M.D., J.D., director of the Division of Public Health and Chief Medical Officer for the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

“Doctors can positively impact the overall health of their patients by asking them about their tobacco use, advising them to quit and referring them to available resources, such as the Nebraska Tobacco Quitline,” said Acierno. “Likewise, patients can make great strides in improving their health by talking to their doctor about their tobacco use and following his or her advice.”

The Nebraska Tobacco Quitline is funded by the DHHS Tobacco Free Nebraska program. The toll-free Quitline – 1-800-QUIT-NOW (784-8669) – gives Nebraska residents free, 24/7 access to tobacco cessation counseling and support services. “Last year, over 56 percent of callers to the Quitline heard about the Quitline from their doctor or another health care provider,” noted Acierno. “We hope to see that number increase.”

Recognizing the benefits of patients working with their doctors to quit their tobacco use, the Tobacco Free Nebraska program has developed and distributed a variety of tools for health care providers through the years, including patient room posters with tear-off cards promoting the Quitline, flyers and a number of clinician aids.

“We applaud the CDC for bringing attention to the powerful relationship between doctors and their patients and how that relationship can help people successfully quit their tobacco use,” said Acierno.

The CDC’s TIPS campaign encourages people to quit smoking by highlighting the toll that smoking-related illnesses take on smokers and their loved ones. The campaign features people who are living with the real and painful consequences of smoking. For more information about the TIPS campaign, visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips/index.html>.

For more information about the Nebraska Tobacco Quitline, visit <http://QuitNow.ne.gov>.

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