



PRESS RELEASE FOR LOCAL MEDIA

Central Michigan District Health Department
“Promoting Healthy Families, Healthy Communities”

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To: Local Media
From: Scott R. Miller, Health Educator
RE: Anti-Tobacco Initiative
Release Date: June 2013

**NEW ANTI-TOBACCO INITIATIVE LAUNCHES WITH MASS-MEDIA EFFORT
THROUGH SIX CENTRAL MICHIGAN COUNTIES**

**CMDHD Aims to Impact Nearly 200,000 Residents
with Empowering Messages of Support and Encouragement**

People in the central Michigan counties of Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Isabella, Osceola, and Roscommon will begin to see more anti-tobacco messages on billboards, television, radio, and in newspapers beginning June 1st. The Central Michigan District Health Department (CMDHD) is starting an Anti-Tobacco Initiative aimed to reach users of all forms of tobacco and their families. This initiative is funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention through a Community Transformation Grant designed for small communities. Many different messages encouraging smokers and tobacco users to quit will appear across central Michigan.

The messages will be seen and heard between June 1st, 2013 and May 31st, 2014. They will encourage tobacco users to call 1-800-QUIT-NOW. The goal is to provide messages of support while encouraging people to live tobacco-free. “We want to let tobacco users know that we understand how hard it is to quit when you seem to be surrounded by family, friends, or co-workers that are tobacco users” says Scott R. Miller, CMDHD Health Educator. CMDHD has created a series of messages that use personal experiences, education, encouragement, and humor. These messages will inform tobacco users about resources to help them quit, including 1-800-QUIT-NOW. The messages aim to impact current tobacco users and those most likely to begin using tobacco.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), tobacco use is the most preventable cause of disease and death in the United States. An estimated 443,000 people die early from smoking or exposure to secondhand smoke each year. Also, each day in the United

States, about 3,800 people under age 18 smoke their first cigarette. Nearly 1,000 will become daily cigarette smokers. It is estimated that one out of every three teenagers currently using tobacco in Michigan, about 298,000 Michigan teens, will die prematurely. The CDC reports that most tobacco users begin using during their youth. More than 80% of adult smokers begin smoking before 18 years of age. “We may not be able to stop that completely,” states Miller, “but we can easily give our neighbors and family members the information and the tools they need to help stay healthy.”

If you would like to get involved with the anti-tobacco initiative, consider joining Together We Can. Together We Can is a community project aimed at improving health status in the central Michigan counties of Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Isabella, Osceola, and Roscommon. For more information LIKE Together We Can Health Improvement Council on Facebook, visit our website at www.together-we-can.org or email us at TogetherWeCan@cmdhd.org.

This article has been brought to you by Central Michigan District Health Department, which serves the counties of Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Isabella, Osceola and Roscommon. Visit our website at www.cmdhd.org and LIKE Central Michigan District Health Department on Facebook.

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