

TOBACCO-Free QC

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR OUR COMMUNITY





ABOUT US

In a visionary effort to unite many local resources to improve the health of the Quad City community, the Tobacco-Free QC Coalition, also known as the TFQC, was formed. At our initial meeting in September of 1998, five Quad City health care organizations came together. These five organizations have now been joined by numerous other organizations and include representatives from local law enforcement, community groups, and individuals.

Tobacco use has various effects on the citizens of the Quad City community. Each of the agencies involved with the TFQC see these effects on a daily basis. These effects include loss of productivity, rising health care costs, decreased quality of life and lives lost prematurely. Rather than working independently to manage these health issues for community members based on a geographic, economic or diagnostic basis, TFQC members recognize the synergy created by working together. Seeing the Quad Cities as a single community rather than a jigsaw puzzle of individual cities, neighborhoods, or demographic clusters, the TFQC is able to work together to focus on changing behaviors to create a healthier community.

WHO WE ARE

OUR MISSION

To reduce the impact of tobacco use in our community.

HOW WE DO THIS

Increase the knowledge of our community about the impacts of tobacco.

Strengthen tobacco-related policies and legislation in our community.

OUR STRUCTURE

The bi-state Tobacco-Free QC Coalition, or TFQC, is comprised of a variety of member organizations and individuals dedicated to reducing the impact of tobacco use in the Quad Cities. This group meets routinely throughout the year to discuss the direction of the coalition.

In the past, the TFQC structure included an Executive Committee that provided direction and vision for the TFQC. Over the years, the Executive Committee has provided guidance, overseen fulfillment of the TFQC's goals, strategies and mission, mobilized support for TFQC efforts, endorsed the work of the TFQC workgroups, ensured sustainability, and kept the TFQC in the public eye as an organization at the forefront of creating and maintaining a healthy Quad Cities. With the recent strategic planning efforts undertaken by the TFQC, these responsibilities have been transferred to the TFQC Coalition as a whole.

Members of the TFQC Full Coalition are invited to serve on one or more of the committees and workgroups that have been created to address the issue of tobacco by focusing on preventing the initiation of tobacco use, promoting cessation, reducing the availability of tobacco, influencing legislation, and reducing secondhand smoke exposure.

OUR PAST ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The following list includes some of the accomplishments of the TFQC since its inception:

- Assisted businesses in tobacco-free policy development
- Hosted trainings for health care providers on tobacco cessation
- Provided access to six weeks worth of NRT patches and tobacco cessation counseling for Rock Island County residents trying to quit tobacco use
- Educated the community about the health impacts of tobacco use
- Provided education about quitting smoking and the dangers of secondhand smoke to Rock Island County's Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program participants
- Partnered with the Iowa and Illinois Departments of Public Health to monitor the status of tobacco in our community
- Assisted in the implementation of increased cigarette taxes in Iowa and Illinois
- Provided local support for the passage of the Smoke-free Illinois Act and the Iowa Smokefree Air Act
- Served as a community resource for agencies and organizations



OUR STRATEGIC PLAN

In March 2009, after celebrating recent accomplishments in tobacco control efforts across the states of Iowa and Illinois and the nation, the Tobacco-Free QC initiated a process to envision the future of the TFQC. Since 2008, three main strategies for effective tobacco use reduction efforts have been realized. In late 2007 and early 2008, the legislatures in Illinois and Iowa passed wide-ranging legislation known as the Smoke-free Illinois Act and the Iowa Smokefree Air Act, banning smoking from public places, places of employment and certain outdoor areas. These pieces of legislation effectively protect nearly 99% of all employees in their workplaces and individuals in public areas. Second, a national 62-cent cigarette tax was passed by the U.S. Congress and went into effect in April 2009, increasing the overall price of cigarettes nationwide. Lastly, a hard fought battle was won in June 2009 when the U.S. Congress passed legislation granting the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) unprecedented regulation over tobacco products and the tobacco industry.

OUR STRATEGIC PLAN CONT.

Following these accomplishments, the TFQC recognized the need to reevaluate the goals and strategies set for the Coalition in order to ensure continued success in its efforts to reduce tobacco use in the community. Three strategic planning sessions were held during the Spring and Fall of 2009 which brought to light common goals that remain relevant. Members who participated in these planning sessions reiterated the passion and dedication of our community to remain firm in our commitment to creating and maintaining a healthy Quad Cities. The group established two goals:

GOAL 1

Increase the Knowledge of Our Community About the Impacts of Tobacco

STRATEGIES

1. Provide tobacco-related education to community groups.
2. Educate elementary school youth on the dangers of tobacco use.
3. Partner with youth groups such as Iowa's Just Eliminate Lies (JEL) youth advocacy group, and others to educate and advocate for tobacco control-related issues.
4. Sponsor opportunities to provide education to health care professionals about tobacco and tobacco-related behavior changes.
5. Partner with community groups to provide tobacco-related education to specific populations (pregnant moms, the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) community, etc.).

GOAL 2

Strengthen Tobacco-related Policies & Legislation in Our Community

STRATEGIES

1. Provide education and assistance to area businesses and community groups on the benefits of strengthening existing tobacco use policies to make them tobacco-free.
2. Increase knowledge of the Tobacco-Free QC Coalition on local and state tobacco-related issues.
3. Educate local, state and national elected officials on the benefits of tobacco-control funding, efforts, and legislation
4. Promote smoke-free car policies.
5. Promote smoke-free homes policies.
6. Promote smoke-free parks policies.



TOBACCO-*Free* QC

Smoking is the number one preventable cause of death in our country, while the exposure to secondhand smoke is the number three preventable cause of death. Over 400,000 people die from smoking related deaths each year, while more than 50,000 die from exposure to secondhand smoke.

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The TFQC is an affiliate project of the Quad City Health Initiative.