

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**DATE:** May 24, 2018

**End Date:** May 31, 2018

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**RE: Genesee County Health Department Recognizes World No Tobacco Day 2018**

Each year on May 31<sup>st</sup>, the Genesee County Health Department, along with organizations and individuals around the globe, mark World No Tobacco Day, highlighting the health risks associated with tobacco use and advocating for effective policies to reduce tobacco consumption. Sponsored by the World Health Organization (WHO), the theme for World No Tobacco Day 2018 is "Tobacco and Heart Disease."

Heart disease and other cardiovascular diseases, including stroke, combined are the world's leading causes of death. Tobacco use causes one out of every three deaths from cardiovascular disease, including heart disease and stroke. Secondhand smoke exposure causes 34,000 early deaths from coronary heart disease each year in the United States. The Genesee County Health Department is working to increase awareness about actions to reduce the risks to heart health posed by tobacco.

"Tobacco use and addiction begins during youth and young adulthood. 95% of adult smokers began smoking before the age of 21. It's critical that Michigan invest in sustained tobacco prevention and control programming and implement evidence-based tobacco control strategies to protect our children from a lifetime of addiction to a deadly product," stated John McKellar, Health Officer at the Genesee County Health Department.

Michigan spends \$1.63 million annually on tobacco prevention and control programming, while tobacco use costs the state nearly \$4.6 billion in health care costs, including nearly \$1.4 billion in Medicaid costs. The tobacco industry spends an estimated \$295 million annually to market their products in Michigan. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that Michigan spend \$110 million on tobacco prevention and control programming each year.

Funding Michigan tobacco prevention and control programming at the level recommended by the CDC, raising the price of tobacco products and raising the legal minimum age to purchase tobacco products are proven, effective ways to reduce tobacco use rates and prevent children from starting to use tobacco. By preventing youth from starting to use tobacco and helping people to quit, the result is a reduction in tobacco-related healthcare costs, diseases and deaths.

The Genesee County Health Department wants people to know that there is help available to Michigan residents who want to quit using tobacco through the Michigan Tobacco Quitline. Callers to the Quitline can receive information and referral and, if qualified, can enroll in a free coaching program and even receive nicotine replacement medications to assist them in quitting. Call the Michigan Tobacco Quitline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW (784-8669) or visit online at <https://michigan.quitlogix.org/> .

For more information, please contact Taya Karki, Health Educator at the Genesee County Health Department at [tkarki@gchd.us](mailto:tkarki@gchd.us) or 810-341-5900. For help with quitting tobacco use, talk with your healthcare provider or contact the Michigan Tobacco Quitline at 1-800-784-8669. To learn more about World No Tobacco Day, visit <http://www.who.int/tobacco/wntd/en/> .

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