



COLORADO TOBACCO EDUCATION & PREVENTION ALLIANCE

News Release

For Immediate Release

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Help available for Latinos who want to quit smoking for New Year's

DENVER—Nearly 27 percent of English-speaking Latinos in Colorado smoke. As the New Year approaches, many are looking for ways to quit.

The Latino Statewide Tobacco Prevention and Education Network (LSTPEN) wants to make sure Latinos across Colorado are aware of the resources available to help them succeed at their New Year's resolution to quit smoking. "Quitting smoking is a life- and money-saving decision," said LSTPEN member Fernando Pineda-Reyes. "We hope more Latinos will use the state's great quit smoking resources."

According to recent research from the State Tobacco Education and Prevention Partnership, 26.9 percent of English-speaking Latinos smoke, compared with 13 percent of the Spanish-speaking Latino population and 18 percent of the general state population.

While quitting tobacco is never easy, resources are available that will greatly increase a person's ability to stop smoking. The Colorado QuitLine is a free telephone-based, stop-smoking support program that provides smokers with coaching and free nicotine patches for those medically eligible. The QuitLine is a confidential resource available seven days a week in Spanish and English. State residents can call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) or find a menu of resources at www.myquitpath.com.

Medicaid also has resources for Coloradans ready to quit smoking. A new state benefit covers two 90-day courses of tobacco medications per year. Stop smoking medications such as the nicotine patch or prescription Chantix are available with a \$1 co-pay for generic medications and a \$3 co-pay for brand-name medications. Pregnant women and nursing home residents have access to free medications.

Tobacco use remains the single largest preventable cause of disease and premature death in Colorado, costing the state more than \$1.3 billion per year in health care expenditures. "You can do it," says Bob Doyle, executive director of the Colorado Tobacco Education and Prevention Alliance. "It can take several tries, but getting help and using a tobacco medication can greatly increase your chances of success."

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LSTPEN was formed in 2005 by state and local organizations with an interest in positively impacting the health of Colorado's Hispanic/Latino population. LSTPEN consists of five regions throughout the state that contain six community coalitions made up of community-based organizations, individuals and local health departments.