



Cherokee Nation Public Health and Wellness Fund Act - PHWFA Section 1006.A: Smoking Cessation Fund Annual Report to the Cherokee Nation Tribal Council

Legislation Title: PHWFA Section 1006.A: Smoking Cessation Fund

Legislation Date: March 3rd, 2023

Funding Amount: \$350,000 - per year

Period of Performance: 8 Years – (Start Date: 03/03/2023 – End Date: 8/30/2030)

Program Year: FY24, Year 02 (includes additional unexpended funds from FY 23)

Introduction

PHWFA Section 1006: “Smoking Cessation Fund” requires that the Cherokee Nation Public Health Department report annually summarizing the projects and programs funded under this section of the Act, the efficacy of such projects and such other information as shall advise the Council of the effectiveness of expenditures.

Program Overview

The priority of this initiative is focused on helping reduce the harm to tribal citizens by smoking cigarettes and e-cigarette vaping use. Cherokee Nation Public Health aims to promote smoking cessation and reduce smoking-related health disparities by building on current programs and activities across the Cherokee Nation. This dedicated funding will help to combat these issues by boosting public health smoking cessation programs aimed at meeting the following long-term goals:

- Strengthen and sustain smoking cessation services and resources.
- Increase Cherokee citizens awareness and knowledge related to the dangers of smoking and wellness benefits of cessation.
- Expand surveillance of smoking cessation behaviors and strengthen performance measurement and evaluation related smoking cessation interventions.

Summary of Smoking Cessation Fund Projects and Programs

The purpose of the PHWFA Section 1006 Smoking Cessation Fund is to authorize the Cherokee Nation Public Health Department to develop and implement innovative programs, and strategies to assist Cherokee citizens struggling with smoking addiction. This funding also supports the improvement of existing programs or the development of new ones. The following is a summary of projects and programs implemented in FY 2024 that have bolstered Public Health’s current smoking cessation interventions to advance wellness and promote healthier tribal citizens and communities.



Increase access and sustain cessation programs and activities:

Smoking Cessation Funds have helped to create two new public health positions dedicated to focus on expanding and enhancing tobacco prevention and cessation programs: 1 FTE program coordinator to work on program planning, oversight and development and 1 FTE program surveillance and evaluation specialist to begin the development of a Cherokee Nation tobacco prevention data dashboard and conduct program evaluation that will expand and enhance public health’s data, surveillance and workforce capacity. In addition to the in-person 7-week smoking cessation course, Public Health has also expanded a virtual cessation course to provide At-large Citizens an option to participate in a Cherokee Nation smoking cessation class. The addition of the program coordinator position has made it possible for Public Health to attend and provide a smoking cessation program informational table for on the reservation and At- large community meetings. This has helped to increase awareness and interest in our virtual smoking cessation classes. CNPH has also developed and obtained new tobacco prevention and cessation health education materials and resources such as quit kits and informational flyers and teaching tools for smoking cessation classes. The quit kits and health education information were distributed to tribal citizens during outreach events to increase awareness and encourage participation in tobacco cessation interventions and encourage interest in signing up for a cessation class. The program coordinator has been able to attend the following At-large meetings to share smoking cessation program information and quit kit materials with At-large citizens:

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| 2/10/2024 – Florida | 5/5/24 – Dallas, TX |
| 3/16/24 – Kansas City | 6/22/24 – Atlanta, GA |
| 3/17/24 – Wichita, Kansas | 7/20/24 – Denver, CO |
| 4/6/24 – Oklahoma City | 7/21/24 – Albuquerque, NM |
| 4/19/24 – Bakersfield, CA | 8/3/24 – Portland, OR |
| 4/20/24 – Fresno, CA | 8/4/24 – Seattle, WA |
| 4/21/24- Sacramento, CA | 8/10/24 – Washington, D.C. |
| 5/4/24 – Ft. Worth, TX | |

Incentives to increase smoking cessation among employees

Cherokee Nation Public Health has implemented a worksite-based incentive for Cherokee Nation employees that complete the 7-week smoking cessation class. The Tobacco Prevention Coordinator distributed nine tobacco cessation all employee emails to Cherokee Nation employees offering free tobacco cessation classes. Beginning in February 2024, funding has been used to increase the incentive for Cherokee Nation tribal government employees who complete Public Health’s online smoking cessation course from \$50 to \$150. Any Cherokee Nation employee that completes the 7-week cessation class is eligible to receive a \$150 gift card as an incentive to encourage participation and support behavior change. Cherokee Nation Public Health will work to assess ways to expand this type of incentive tool in community-based smoking cessation classes for all Cherokee citizens.



FY24 (Oct 23 – Aug 2024) Smoking Cessation Course Participation

- 21 - Smoking cessation classes held
- 189 – Smoking cessation class referrals received
- 27 - Incentive gift cards have been distributed to Cherokee Nation employees who completed the program.

Smoking Cessation class participants:

- 73 - Employees
- 3 - At-large citizens
- 7 - On Reservation citizens

Smoking Cessation participants who completed the 7-week program:

- 35 – Cherokee Nation employees
- 2 - At-large citizens
- 2 - On Reservation citizens

Total number of participants that quit using tobacco:

- 30 – Cherokee Nation employees
- 2 - At-large citizens
- 4 - On Reservation citizens
- 36 - Total participants that quit

Smoking & Tobacco Cessation Success Report Summary FY24 (Oct 2023-Aug 2024)

When comparing the number of smoking cessation class participants and the total number of participants who reported they quit using tobacco, the success rate is 43%. Additionally, the success rate of those who reported they completed the 7-week smoking cessation program is 47%. The estimated cost savings for a pack a day smoker that quits using tobacco in Oklahoma:

- Individual Daily Cost Savings: \$7 per pack x1 pack/day = **\$7 per day.**
- Individual Monthly Cost Savings: \$7 per day x 30 days = **\$210 per month.**
- Individual Annual Cost Savings: \$210 per month x 12 months = **\$2,520 per year.**
- Individual Five years Cost Savings: \$2,520 per year x 5 years = **\$12,600 per 5 years.**
- Annual Cessation Participants Cost Savings: \$2,520 X 36 participants quit = **\$90,720**

(This is based upon current average pricing in Oklahoma as of September 2024. *Note – Data limitation for estimation of cost of savings per person with the assumption of one pack of cigarettes per day. Factors such as location in the United States for cost of cigarettes and individual variability of smoking habits should be taken into consideration when calculating daily and yearly savings. Please refer to data source link: [https://smokefree.gov/quit-smoking/why-you-should-quit/how-much-will-you-save.](https://smokefree.gov/quit-smoking/why-you-should-quit/how-much-will-you-save))



Tobacco control efforts are associated with preventing an estimated 8 million premature deaths and extending the average life expectancy for those who do not initiate smoking by 2.3 years for men and by 1.6 years for women.¹ Successful evidence-based interventions aim to reduce or delay initiation of smoking, alcohol use, and illicit drug use. This has been shown to improve outcomes for children and teens by reducing or mitigating modifiable risk factors and bolstering protective factors.² The Cherokee Nation YRBS (Youth Risk Behavior Survey) data showed a significant decrease in the number of high school students who currently smoked cigarettes from 22.8% in 2010 compared to 5.2% in 2023.³ However, electronic vapor product usage among high school students has increased. In 2023, 21.6% of high school students reported current electronic vapor product usage on the Cherokee Nation YRBS survey.³ High school students have shown an increasing interest in tobacco cessation with 52.9% of students stating that they have tried to quit tobacco products on the 2023 Cherokee Nation YRBS.³ Interestingly, a higher percentage (58.1%) of Native American/Alaska Native students tried to quit tobacco products compared to other racial categories (51.7% Hispanic Latino; 49.9% White).³ This data highlights the need to ensure tobacco prevention and vaping cessation programs, resources, and educational information are available and easily accessible for youth.

Increase awareness and knowledge related to smoking and cessation

Public Health was able to increase the number of smoking cessation community outreach events implemented which included the following:

GASO (Great American Smoke Out) - November 16, 2023

The Great American Smoke Out occurs the third Thursday of November each year. Cherokee Nation public health educators set up informational booths in their local community on this day and gave out quit kits about public health's tobacco cessation classes along with resource information on the 1-800-QUIT-NOW line.

Through with Chew Week - February 18-24, 2024

Cherokee Nation Public Health promoted Through with Chew Week by setting up informational tables in communities throughout the Cherokee Nation reservation to educate community members on the dangers of smokeless tobacco or "chew." Educational materials on the dangers of smokeless tobacco were provided along with flyers for our tobacco cessation classes.

Take Down Tobacco Day - April 1, 2024

This is a National Day of Advocacy that empowers youth to stand out and speak up against Big Tobacco. A local high school requested Cherokee Nation Public Health Tobacco Prevention Program Coordinator to be a guest speaker on April 4th and provide a presentation to approximately 200 high school students on the dangers of smoking, vaping, and smokeless tobacco use. Students also got to experience a hands-on activity with healthy vs unhealthy lungs and Mr. Gross Mouth.



World No Tobacco Day - May 31, 2024

Cherokee Nation Public Health in collaboration with CN Communications Department developed and launched the “Keep it Traditional” campaign during World No Tobacco Day event held on May 31st, 2024, to raise awareness and promote the availability of Cherokee Nation Public Health’s smoking cessation programs and services. Principal Chief Chuck Hoskin Jr. also signed a proclamation at the live streamed event. The campaign also promoted a cultural message that tobacco is sacred to our people and that cigarettes, chew and e-cigarette vaping are not the traditional healing tools our ancestors wanted for our health. Keep it Traditional smoking cessation quit kits, Keep It Traditional T-shirts were distributed to participants and public health educators held outreach events in communities across the CN Reservation to help citizens sign up for cessation classes or to answer questions.

World No Tobacco Day Community Outreach Event Participants: Total 645 Participants

- Adair County – 26 participants
- Delaware County – 53 participants
- Washington County – 50 participants
- Sequoyah County – 42 participants
- Mayes County – 53 participants
- Nowata County – 14 participants
- Muskogee – 145 participants
- Cherokee County – 262 participants

Social Media Awareness

Cherokee Nation Public Health has also increased the number of social media posts that promote Tobacco Cessation. In FY24, Social media efforts include 6 key smoking cessation social media posts, that provides a reach of 86 shares, 599 likes, 62 comments.

References

¹ Holford TR, Meza R, Warner KE, et al. Tobacco control and the reduction in smoking-related premature deaths in the United States, 1964-2012. *JAMA*. 2014;311(2):164-171. doi:10.1001/jama.2013.285112.

² NIDA. How can we prevent tobacco use?. National Institute on Drug Abuse website. <https://nida.nih.gov/publications/research-reports/tobacco-nicotine-e-cigarettes/how-can-we-prevent-tobacco-use>. April 12, 2021 Accessed March 8, 2024.

³ Cherokee Nation, YRBS (Youth Risk Behavior Survey) Report 2023. (Unpublished).