

Promoting Smoking and Tobacco Cessation Within Your Dental Practice



Tobacco and oral health

Tobacco use can have significant adverse effects on oral health. Oral health professionals in the dental office or community setting have a unique opportunity to increase tobacco abstinence rates among tobacco users.¹

During an oral exam, a dental provider can identify intra-oral changes induced by tobacco use including precancerous or cancerous lesions. Although cigarettes are the most commonly used form of tobacco, other recreational tobacco formulations include conventional smokeless tobacco; compressed dissolvable tobacco; cigars; tobacco pipes and water pipes (i.e., hookahs); and electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes)² — all of which can compromise oral and systemic health.

¹ “Effectiveness of dentist’s intervention in smoking cessation: A review.” *J Clin Exp Dent*. 2016 Feb; 8(1)78-83.

² American Dental Association (ADA). Smoking and Tobacco Cessation. <https://www.ada.org/en/member-center/oral-health-topics/smoking-and-tobacco-cessation>.

Ask, Advise, Refer

Use these three steps to identify and advise patients who use tobacco. Some of these steps can be delegated to members of your oral health care team.

► Step 1: Ask

While collecting vital signs, health history, and oral assessments, ask the patient whether they smoke or use other forms of tobacco. Document the patient’s tobacco use status.

► Step 2: Advise

Once a smoker has been identified, advise the patient to quit by saying something like, “I see that you smoke. Quitting smoking is one of the most important things you can do for your health right now. Have you thought about quitting?” This advice works best when delivered in a nonjudgmental tone.

You can make the advice **more compelling** by personalizing it, for example, linking it to the identified oral health tissue changes.

► Step 3: Refer

For patients who are interested in trying to quit, you or other members of your team can refer patients to the PA Free Quitline at **1-800-QUIT-NOW (784-8669)** and/or offer information about tobacco cessation treatment.



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Become a tobacco cessation counselor

Dental providers, including dental hygienists, who provide face-to-face tobacco cessation counseling must use code **D1320 to be paid \$15 per encounter for up to 70 encounters (inclusive of all provider types) per calendar year.**

Providers must provide more than 10 minutes of face-to-face counseling in order to submit a claim for a tobacco cessation counseling visit. This does not apply to federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) and rural health clinics (RHCs).*

In order to be eligible for reimbursement, you must participate in the Pennsylvania Medical Assistance program and be approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Health.

Steps to become a tobacco cessation counselor

- **Every Smoker, Every Time Training** is free online training that provides entry-level tobacco-use-related education for behavioral and primary health care staff, counselors, social workers, and others. Access the training at <https://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/4303018/Every-Smoker-Every-Time>.
- Submit a pre-approved Tobacco Cessation Registry Application after successfully passing a post test of the above training. <https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/programs/tobacco/pages/registry.aspx>
- Pre-Approved Tobacco Cessation Registry Application Instructions are available at <https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/Documents/Programs/Tobacco/Registry%20Application%20Instructions.pdf>.

*FQHCs and RHCs are paid an all-inclusive per-encounter payment rate. FQHCs and RHCs should submit claims for tobacco cessation counseling services when provided at the time of a face-to-face visit using procedure code T1015, defined as “clinic visit/encounter, all-inclusive.”

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