exposure.

The Newsletter of the Tobacco Free Task Force in Washington County

Volume: 2006-07 | Issue: CleartheAir

Proposed Budget Cuts Tobacco Use Prevention and Cessation Funds

The level of funding available for the *Tobacco Free Program* has been cut by 25%, as proposed in Governor Rendell's 07-08 budget. This results in a 9% funding level for tobacco use prevention and cessation programs, rather than the 12% approved by Act 77 of 2001.

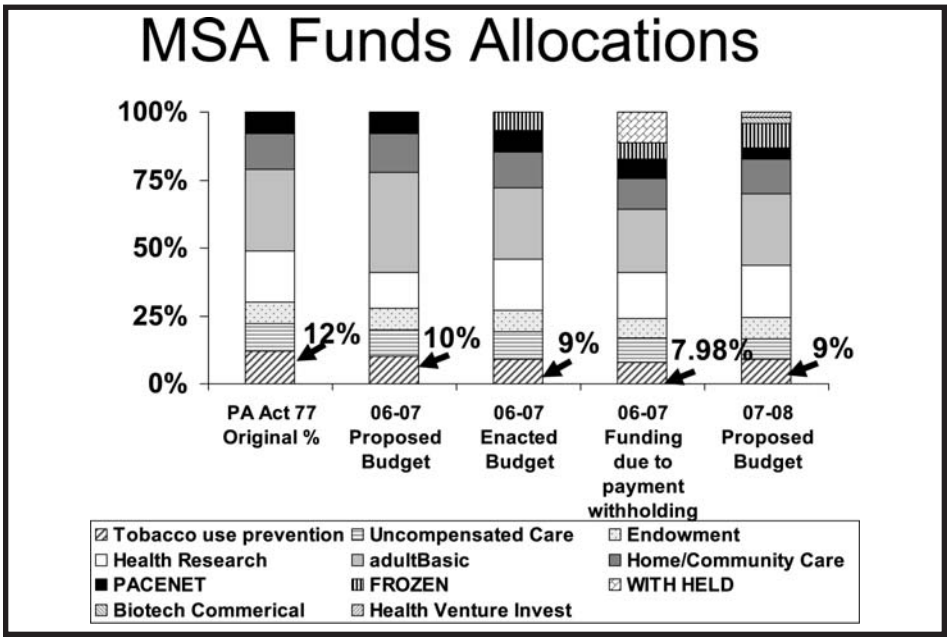
- Healthcare costs to Pennsylvania for tobacco-related illnesses last year were $5.19 billion ($1.7 billion paid by Medicaid), and over 20,000 residents lost their lives.[1]

- Smoking caused productivity losses of $4.63 billion.[1]

While the tobacco industry spends $706 million per year to make people in Pennsylvania sick, Pennsylvania is proposing to spend only $30.1 million on tobacco prevention and cessation programs to keep people well. This is 23 times less—and less than 50% of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's recommended minimum amount.

Costs and lives lost will continue to increase without a well-funded, sustained, comprehensive approach to tobacco control.[2]

A comprehensive approach decreases the use of tobacco, prevents youth from starting a lifetime addiction, protects Pennsylvanians from exposure to secondhand smoke, reduces tobacco-related healthcare costs, and ultimately saves lives.



[1] *Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids fact sheet, The Toll of Tobacco in Pennsylvania, 2006.*

[2] *Comprehensive tobacco prevention and control programs include: public education efforts; community and school-based prevention programs; help for tobacco users to quit; enforcement of laws that prohibit tobacco sales to minors (under age 18) and laws that establish smoke-free workplaces and public areas; and ongoing evaluation to ensure program effectiveness, including economic and health benefits.*

Next Tobacco Free Task Force Meeting
Friday, March 23, 2007
9-11 a.m.

Hillsview Chapel Meditation Area, Presbyterian SeniorCare, Washington, PA

Next Issue: *Peer Factor*

tobacco free.
A Program of Washington County Health Partners

Fast Facts

Anyone Caught Smoking Will Be Ejected!
McGrogan's Taproom is Washington County's only smoke-free bar.

The Canonsburg facility opened in September 2006.

Management and ownership of the bar say it opened as a smoke-free facility, and they are doing brisk, and growing, business each week.

McGrogan's plans to stay a smoke-free establishment.

Source: Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Erie County Public Smoking Ban Struck Down
Earlier this month, Erie County Judge John Bozza struck down Erie County's recently implemented Clean Indoor Air law.

Judge Bozza, in striking down the law, cited language in the 1988 Pennsylvania Clean Indoor Air Act regarding preemption, which restricts the powers of municipalities to act on their own in creating such restrictions.

The preemption clause was also used to temporarily stop at least part of Allegheny County's Public Smoking Ban.

While most workplaces are protected, a judge has allowed smoking in bars and restaurants there to continue until May 1, 2007, when, if no action has been taken by the General Assembly to enact a Clean Indoor Air law, the complete ban will go into effect.

Governor Ed Rendell, as part of his "Prescription for Pennsylvania," has urged the General Assembly to pass Clean Indoor Air legislation by June 30, 2007.

Sources: www.phillyburbs.com; www.post-gazette.com

Clear the Air Program Updates

Clear the Air *increases the number of smoke-free places*.

The Tobacco Free Program of Washington County Health Partners' (WCHP) plan for the current fiscal year includes, by June 30, 2007, the distribution of 500 Smoke-free Home and Vehicle Pledge Kits and 500 New Baby Smoke-free Home and Vehicle Pledge Kits.

The kits, which include pledge cards, stickers, and information on the dangers of secondhand smoke, are distributed through the local media from public service announcements, at community events and health fairs, as well as through various community partnerships. (The kits are free for Washington County residents and can be obtained by contacting Washington County Health Partners at 1-866-904-FREE (3733).

Guest Speaker: Rosa Snyder-Boyd, Community Action Southwest, WIC Program

One of the biggest distribution efforts of the Smoke-free Home and Vehicle and New Baby Smoke-free Home and Vehicle Pledge Kits is WCHP's partnership with the Washington-Greene office of the Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) program.

"We estimate that about 20% to 30% of our pregnant moms smoke," said Rosa Snyder-Boyd, Nutrition Services Director, Community Action Southwest, which runs the WIC program in Washington and Greene counties. "That doesn't take into account how many of our WIC kids are already exposed to secondhand smoke."

According to Snyder-Boyd, her staff began to get involved in educating clients about the importance of avoiding secondhand smoke three years ago. Staff have been trained in Clean Air for Healthy Children, and they partner with WCHP to distribute the New Baby Smoke-free Home and Vehicle Kit registration forms through the WIC newsletter. The past two years' responses have been very successful, with over 600 kits distributed.

Washington County Day Cares Sent Updated Information on Secondhand Smoke

This year, kit registration forms will be handed out along with the newsletters, as WIC staff visit with client families, giving the families an added opportunity to hear about the importance of avoiding secondhand smoke.
In August 2006, 82 day cares were sent information about the dangers of secondhand smoke. Those items included:

- An introductory letter;
- Information from the U.S. Surgeon General's June 2006 report on secondhand smoke;
- Southwestern District Regional Tobacco Coalition's Special Initiative on maternal smoking;
- Tobacco Free Program posters featuring the Washington Wild Thing; and
- Information regarding the Why Animals Don't Smoke program.

Follow-up surveys about the Why Animals Don't Smoke program will be conducted in May 2007.

Smoke-Free Dining Guide Updated

The Smoke-free Dining Guide was updated in the fall of 2006. The guide contains listings of every smoke-free restaurant in Washington County.

The initial printing of 3,000 guides has recently run out, and a second printing is forthcoming.

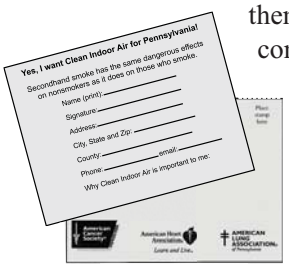
The Washington Hospital currently distributes them as part of their tracking of patient exposure to secondhand smoke, which began in February 2007.

The guides are also distributed at community events, health fairs, physicians' offices, pharmacies, and other health facilities, as well as through press releases in the local media.

Nearing the 1,000 Mark in the Blue Card Campaign

To date, WCHP has collected 939 Blue Cards. The goal, by June 30, 2007, is to collect 1,700 cards.

The signed cards are mailed back to the Pennsylvania Alliance to Control Tobacco, which turns them over to the American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, and American Lung Association to be strategically distributed them to members of the general assembly.



The Blue Card Campaign originated in Delaware, which became the second state in the nation to pass statewide Clean Indoor Air legislation.

The Blue Card Campaign will remain in effect until Clean Indoor Air legislation is passed in Pennsylvania.

In addition to contacting WCHP by phone (1-866-904-FREE) or e-mail (crw@wchpinc.org) to receive Blue Cards, staff members will have them on hand at upcoming community events and health fairs.

Each participant signs two cards. One goes to the state senator, and the other goes to the state representative.

Please remember to fill out why clean indoor air is important to you, which is at the bottom of the Blue Card.

Tracking Tobacco Free Program Success

In each issue, *Exposure* will include progress reports on some of the goals established in our 2006-07 strategic plan. Following is an update on how we are doing at reducing adult and youth tobacco use, and eliminating it as a norm.

Tobacco Free Program Areas	FY06-07 Goal	Progress as of February 2007
Ask and Advise: *Number of physicians, dentists, and pharmacists visited and given materials to support 2As and R*	60 health care professionals	8
Clear the Air: *Number of Smoke-free Home & Vehicle, and New Baby Smoke-free Home & Vehicle pledges*	1,000 pledges	55
Do Your Part: *Average % of compliant retailers*	90% or more	96.34%
Help to Quit: *Number of people in tobacco cessation programs*	300 people	172
Help to Quit: *Tobacco cessation quit rate*	14.1% or higher	-
Help to Quit: *Number of tobacco users in Get Free Program*	25 people	9
Help to Quit: *Number of Tobacco Quit Kits distributed*	250 kits	65
Knowledge in Action: *Number of Blue Cards filled out*	1,700 cards	939
Knowledge in Action: *Number of program participant endorsements*	499 endorsements	412
Knowledge in Action: *Number of legislative visits/contacts*	9 visits/contacts	10
Set Them Free: *Number of children reached with prevention (community and school)*	7,883 children	2,786
Peer Factor: *Number of events*	4 events	3
Peer Factor: *Number of teens who quit using tobacco*	4 teens	-

Fast Facts (*continued*)

More Legislation to Fine Smoking Adults in Cars with Children
Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island are among a growing number of states considering bans on smoking in a car when a child is present.

Louisiana and Arkansas already have similar laws on the books.

In Bangor, Maine, an ordinance in effect since January allows police to fine drivers $50 for smoking in a car with anyone under age 18.

The national push comes as more and more restaurants and bars ban smoking.

A Harvard School of Public Health study published in November found that the secondhand smoke inside cars posed a "potentially serious threat to children's health," increasing the risk of ear infections and worsening asthma.

Source: www.pawtuckettimes.com

exposure.

Tobacco Free Task Force
Washington County Health Partners
Washington Federal Square Building
190 North Main Street, Suite 208
Washington, PA 15301

www.tobaccofreewashington.org

NONPROFIT ORG.
US POSTAGE
PAID
WASHINGTON PA
PERMIT NO 93

ClearTheAir

February 23 Meeting Notes Inside...

Note: You are invited to the next Tobacco Free Task Force meeting. Details are on the front page of this issue of Exposure.

Tobacco Free Task Force Meeting Calendar

Date	Time	Topic
Fri., Mar. 23, 2007	9-11 a.m.	*Peer Factor*
Fri., Apr. 27, 2007	9-11 a.m.	Review Assessment Data/Strategic Planning Part I
Fri., May 18, 2007	9-11 a.m.	Review Assessment Data/Strategic Planning Part II
Fri., June 22, 2007	9-11 a.m.	Review Assessment Data/Strategic Planning Part III

All meetings are held at the Hillsview Chapel Meditation Area, Presbyterian SeniorCare, Washington, PA, unless otherwise noted.

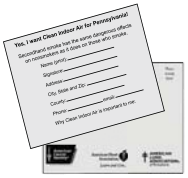
(800) QUIT NOW
(800) 784-8669

Referral line to free tobacco cessation services

exposure.

Looking for a previous issue? Visit www.tobaccofreewashington.org for an archive of all the back issues of *Exposure*.

Get Your Blue Cards Today!



Contact Craig Whyel by phone at 724-222-6511, ext.12, or 1-866-904-3733 (FREE), or by e-mail at crw@wchpinc.org.

Make a Pledge to Keep Your Home and Vehicles Smoke Free

Smoke-free Home and Vehicle Pledge Kit
...Breathing tobacco smoke pollution is harmful to people (especially children). We can help you make your home and vehicles smoke free.

New Baby Smoke-free Home and Vehicle Pledge Kit
...Infants under 18 months of age who live in a smoking household are twice as likely to die from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. We can help you protect the newest member of your family.

Contact us to sign up for your free kit!
724-222-6511 ● 1-866-904-FREE
www.tobaccofreewashington.org

For comments/questions or to subscribe to *Exposure*, contact:
Craig Whyel, Tobacco Free Outreach Specialist
Phone: 724-222-6511, ext.12, or 1-866-904-3733 (FREE)
E-mail: crw@wchpinc.org.

tobacco free.
A Program of Washington County Health Partners

Funding is provided by the PA Department of Health.