

*****For Immediate Release*****

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New Study Shows Tobacco Prevention Programs Cut Adult Smoking Rates

Greater investments in state tobacco prevention programs are undeniably associated with larger and more rapid declines in adult smoking rates, according to a study conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and RTI International, an independent nonprofit research institute based in Research Triangle Park, N.C.

The study, "The Impact of Tobacco Control Programs on Adult Smoking," was published in the February 2008 issue of the *American Journal of Public Health*. The study analyzed data from all 50 states and the District of Columbia, finding that when individual states increased funding for tobacco prevention programs, the adult smoking rates declined.

According to the study, if all states had started in 1995 to fund their tobacco prevention programs at the CDC recommended minimum or optimal levels, there would have been 2.2 million to 7.1 million fewer smokers by 2003. In addition, the researchers calculated that if Michigan had funded its program at the levels recommended by the CDC during that period, there would have been between 104,267 and 298,418 fewer smokers in the state by 2003. The Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids estimates that such smoking declines in Michigan would have saved between 33,365 and 95,494 lives, as well as between \$990.5 million and \$2.835 billion in health care costs.

"The results of this study indicate that if Michigan consistently funded tobacco prevention programming at recommended levels, we could substantially reduce adult smoking rates, reducing smoking-related morbidity, mortality, and economic costs. It is clear that comprehensive state tobacco prevention programs are effective public health investments; NOT investing adequately in tobacco reduction and prevention is the same as squandering public and private health care dollars," said Dr. Ron Davis, President of the American Medical Association and Director, Center for Health Promotion & Disease Prevention, Henry Ford Health System.

Yet, despite extensive research to demonstrate the effectiveness of tobacco prevention programs in reducing smoking prevalence and improving health, Michigan ranks 47th among states in funding tobacco prevention programming. Michigan spends a mere \$3.6 million annually, which is only 3% of the CDC recommended \$121 million annual investment in tobacco prevention. At the same time, Michigan takes in \$1.6 Billion in annual revenue from tobacco sources such as the tobacco settlement agreement and taxes on cigarettes.

Michigan does not spend any of the money it receives from the Master Settlement Agreement with the tobacco companies on tobacco prevention programming. “As part of the tobacco settlement, Michigan anticipates receiving a bonus payment of \$28 million beginning this year. By spending that money on tobacco prevention, we have an opportunity to take a small step to improve the health of Michigan citizens. It’s a good start, and it makes sense not only in terms of health but in terms of money saved on health care costs,” states Susan Schechter, J.D., Director of Advocacy, American Lung Association of Michigan.

Tobacco use remains the leading cause of preventable death and disease nationally. In Michigan, tobacco use causes more than 14,000 preventable deaths from cancers, heart disease and other diseases. Another 2,000 people die as a result of diseases caused by exposure to secondhand smoke. Medical costs to treat tobacco caused disease are more than \$3.4 billion annually. Of that amount, \$1.1 billion are costs to Medicaid.

According to [insert coordinator’s name or local spokesperson], “Despite a lack of adequate funding, in __ County, we have [insert local information related to successes/accomplishments]. With adequate funding, we could implement a comprehensive program and have a greater positive impact on the health of our community.”

The full study is available at <http://www.ajph.org/cgi/content/abstract/98/2/304>. For free help in quitting smoking, contact the Michigan Department of Community Health Quit Line at 1-800-480-7848. [insert local contact information here].

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