



## Smoking Cessation – Tips for Case Managers

Smoking is common in people living with serious mental illness. It is also a risk factor for cardiovascular disease. Luckily, there are several effective treatment options that can help people quit. As a case manager, you can support your clients with smoking cessation by advising them to quit, providing resources and encouraging them during the quitting process.

### Ask – Advise - Refer (AAR)

AAR is a quick and structured way for you to assess if further smoking cessation intervention is needed. This approach can be used anytime smoking comes up in conversation or with clients who smoke with whom you have never discussed smoking cessation. It only takes a few minutes!

**ASK** about the type and amount of tobacco used.

You might say something like:

- *This is something I ask everyone. Do you or anyone in your household smoke? If so, how many cigarettes per day?*

**ADVISE** every tobacco user to quit in clear, strong, and personalized terms. Focus on **positive** personal outcomes of quitting smoking.

You might say something like:

- *The most important thing you can do to improve your health is to quit smoking, I can help you.*
- *You will physically feel better if you quit smoking, and I can help you.*
- *Most people find that they experience significantly less depression when they quit smoking.*
- *You will have money that you would normally spend on cigarettes for the things you enjoy.*

**REFER** to available resources. Explain the options for quit smoking support and how your client can connect to them. You can do this if your client is willing to try quitting or even if they are still unsure.

You might say something like:

- *This is an app that I recommend. It will provide you with support, help you create a plan to quit, and give you ideas to overcome urges to smoke after you have quit. It can also give you even more resources for help if you think you need it. When do you think you will enroll?*
- *If you are still unsure, your doctor can talk to you more about what to expect and medication options that can help you quit. Shall we schedule an appointment?*
- *If you are still unsure, calling a quitline can be helpful because they are private, free and can answer any questions or concerns you have. When do you think you will call?*
- Write your own:



## Support & Encourage Clients While They Quit Smoking

Clients who are quitting are learning a new way of living, managing cravings, and avoiding triggers. It is hard, can take time and often several tries quit smoking for good. Here are some other ideas to help your clients quit:

- Their habit may feel like an old friend who has always been there when times were tough. It is hard to give that up. Try to see it from their point of view.
- Ask your client whether they want you to ask regularly how they are doing.
- Ask how they are feeling – not just whether they have stayed quit.
- Thank them for not exposing others to harmful secondhand smoke.
- Celebrate progress along the way. Quitting smoking is a BIG DEAL!
- Remind them that cravings are typically brief and subside in a few minutes.

### Slips Are Common

A “slip” (taking a puff or smoking a cigarette or two) is common when a person is quitting smoking. In these situations, it is important to remain supportive! A slip does not mean they will start smoking again. Here are some ideas for responding to a client if they have had a slip:

- Validate your client by telling them that quitting is very hard.
- Normalize your client’s experience by telling them that slips are normal.
- Explore with your client how they feel about the slip and what they think might have caused it.
- Encourage your client by reminding them of their quit smoking goals, how long they went before their slip, and that a slip does not mean that they will not be successful.

You might say something like:

- *Slips happen and that's OK. You are learning as you go. How can I help you get back on track?*
- *Quitting is tough! We all have bad days and experience setbacks; you will get through this.*

### If A Client Starts Smoking Again

It is likely that your clients have tried to quit in the past or will try several times while you are working with them. Every quit attempt increases the odds of succeeding, so even a failed attempt can be a step in the right direction. The following are ideas for supporting a client experiencing a setback:

- Praise them for trying to quit; celebrate how long they went (days/weeks/months) not smoking.
- Remind them that they did not fail but that they are learning how to quit.
- Encourage them to try again. Instead of “If you try again...” say “When you try again...”

You might say something like:

- *Quitting isn't easy, and many people need several tries before they quit for good. You've got this, and I'm here for you. What do you think could be done differently when you try again?*

