

TOBACCO PREVENTION INITIATIVE WORK/PROJECT AREA:

Expanding opportunities for individuals in the mental health and substance abuse treatment settings to receive support in ending tobacco dependence and exposure to secondhand smoke.

The Tobacco Prevention Initiative works in collaboration with community partners to support behavioral healthcare providers in making system-wide changes, including integration of tobacco cessation services and policy implementation, to reduce tobacco use and exposure to secondhand smoke. As populations disproportionately burdened by health disparities, we seek to expand opportunities to build capacity and share resources and practices to better serve these communities.

Community partners include:

Exempla West Pines – a leader in providing tobacco-free clinical treatment for mental health and substance abuse needs.

Jefferson Center for Mental Health – a collaborator with our program to address tobacco in mental health, substance abuse and worksite settings.

Signal Behavioral Health Network – a statewide organization working to support licensed/publicly funded substance abuse treatment programs in integrating systems change, including tobacco cessation.

Highlights of accomplishments of 2007-2008 grant year:

- Provided training to staff of two out-patient clinics in the area of tobacco dependence and how to integrate tobacco cessation into the treatment setting
- Provided technical support to created tobacco cessation classes into the curriculum of two out-patient treatment centers.
- Hosted a ground-breaking training for mental health and substance abuse treatment providers by Dr. Libby Stout, Program Director, Circle Program on “Addressing the Need to Integrate tobacco Dependence in the Mental Health/Substance Abuse Setting”.
- Formulated a working group to launch the Tobacco-Free Behavioral Health Care Forums

How we accomplish this work:

Continue to build working relationships with area behavioral health treatment providers to offer tobacco cessation resources, training and technical assistance to support tobacco cessation strategy implementation as well as to reduce secondhand smoke exposure.

Support the implementation of policy change to sustain organizational norms and processes to address tobacco use in these settings.

Challenges: Working in this area is complex and involves bringing professionals in the field up to speed in the latest research which confirms that this needs to be an integral part of the services offered to clients in the substance abuse and mental health setting.

Highlights of plans for 2008-2009 grant year:

- Host a minimum of 4 Tobacco-Free Behavioral Health Forums in collaboration with Exempla West Pines Pines and Signal Behavioral Health to support mental health and substance abuse treatment programs with identifying and addressing critical issues in tobacco control.
- Work with a minimum of 2 behavioral healthcare organizations to support the implementation of policies and protocols to address tobacco-related issues in these settings.

- Continue to provide training, technical assistance and access to resources for behavioral health care providers to meet the tobacco-related needs of substance abuse and mental health-affected clients, as well as to provide support for organizational and social norm change in these settings.

How you can support these activities:

If you know of an substance abuse or mental health treatment organization that is interested/ready to work on system changes and/or policy around tobacco issues, please contact Ed Ellis at (303) 275-7565 or ejellis@jeffco.us.