

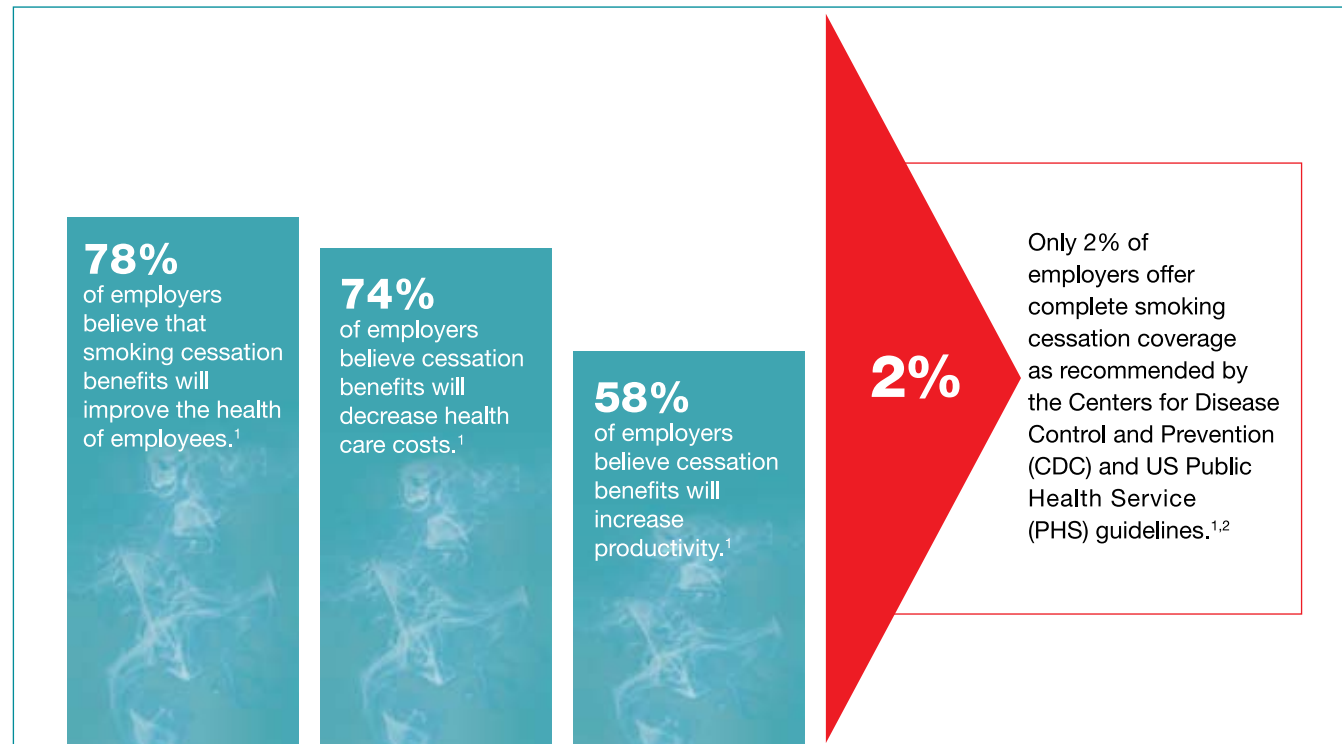


Smoking Cessation Benefit Coverage

The Employer's Role

Many employers see the benefits—we can help put a program into action

According to a national survey of 506 employers conducted by the National Business Group on Health¹:



What comprises good coverage?

The CDC recommends the following components of an effective smoking cessation program, which should include a combination of counseling and medication³:

- At least 4 counseling sessions >30 minutes each
- Prescription and over-the-counter smoking cessation aids
- Allowance for at least 2 cessation attempts per year
- Eliminated or minimized co-pays or deductibles for counseling and medication



The PHS Guideline also recommends that smoking cessation treatment involve both counseling and medication.²

The National Business Group on Health (NBGH) also recommends similar smoking cessation measures.⁴

Smoking cessation assessment

By assessing your company's current smoking cessation coverage benefit, you may learn how you can provide more comprehensive benefits to your employees. Below is a list of questions that will help you determine the scope of your current coverage.

1. How does your smoking cessation benefit compare with the recommended coverage?

■ Four 30-minute counseling sessions Yes No Don't Know

If no, list number of sessions and duration _____

■ Prescription coverage Yes No Don't Know

Rx _____ Co-pay _____

Rx _____ Co-pay _____

Rx _____ Co-pay _____

■ Over-the-counter coverage Yes No Don't Know

OTC _____ OTC _____ OTC _____

■ At least 2 quit attempts per year Yes No Don't Know

How many? _____

■ Eliminated/minimized co-pays/deductibles for counseling and medication? Yes No Don't Know

If so, how? _____

If not, why not? _____

2. How are smoking cessation benefits communicated?

■ How does your health plan identify and document smokers? _____

■ How does your health plan announce the program to employees? _____

■ How is each program component delivered—telephone, mail, or Internet? _____

Resources

Access the following links for more information on smoking cessation benefits:

A comprehensive brochure from the CDC, outlining the “Why, What, and How” of tobacco cessation treatment.

http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/quit_smoking/cessation/00_pdfs/ReimbursementBrochureFull.pdf

Informative materials on smoking cessation from the US Surgeon General, including *Treating Tobacco Use and Dependence: 2008 Update—Clinical Practice Guideline*.

<http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/tobacco>

America’s Health Insurance Plans (AHIP). *Making the Business Case for Smoking Cessation: ROI Calculator*. This Web-based return-on-investment calculator developed by the Center for Health Research (Kaiser Permanente Northwest) and AHIP estimates the impact of smoking cessation interventions for 1 to 5 years.

<http://www.businesscaseroi.org/roi/apps/calculator/calcintro.aspx>

A Purchaser’s Guide to Clinical Preventive Services: Moving Science Into Coverage is a comprehensive resource on preventive services developed by the NBGH in collaboration with the CDC. See chapter 3 for a section featuring tobacco use treatment — “Evidence-Statement: Tobacco Use Treatment (Screening, Counseling, and Treatment).”

<http://www.businessgrouphealth.org/benefitstopics/topics/purchasers/index.cfm>

TOBACCO: THE BUSINESS OF QUITTING, an Employer’s Website for Tobacco Cessation

Sponsored by the NBGH, this extensive Web site equips employers with tools and information to implement effective tobacco cessation benefits, programs, and policies within the workplace.

<http://www.businessgrouphealth.org/tobacco/>

References:

1. Finch R. National Business Group on Health. Smokers in the workplace: exploring employers’ understanding and perceptions of the business impact of smoking. <http://www.businessgrouphealth.org/meetings/forum2007/presentations/plenary/plenary6.pdf>. Accessed August 26, 2008.
2. Fiore MC, Jaén CR, Baker TB, et al. *Treating Tobacco Use and Dependence: 2008 Update*. Clinical Practice Guideline. Rockville, MD: US Department of Health and Human Services. Public Health Service. May 2008.
3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Coverage for Tobacco Use Cessation Treatments: Why, What, and How*. US Department of Health and Human Services. http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/quit_smoking/cessation/00_pdfs/ReimbursementBrochureFull.pdf. Accessed September 22, 2008.
4. National Business Group on Health. Reducing the burden of smoking on employee health and productivity. *Center for Prevention and Health Services—Issue Brief*. 2003;1(5):1-7.