

Implementation of Quitline Financial Incentives to Increase Counseling Sessions among Specific Populations in Vermont

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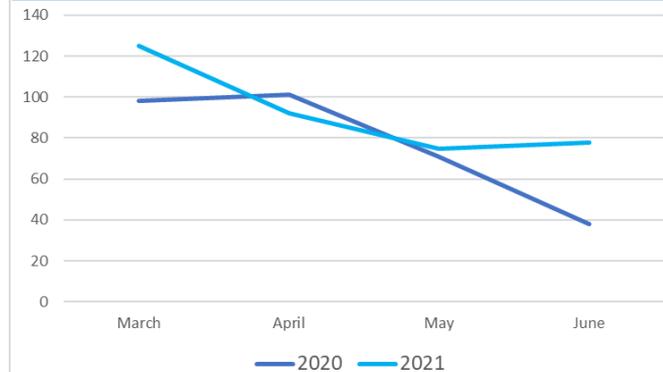
Introduction: Pregnant/post-partum Vermonters use tobacco at twice the national average (15%). Medicaid or uninsured Vermonters use tobacco at nearly three times that of those privately insured (29%). Among youth and young adults, nearly one-third of past 30-day smokers used menthol cigarettes. Vermont first introduced gift card incentives-up to the quitline (802Quits) to \$65-in 2012 with the adoption of a pregnancy/post-partum protocol through its quitline vendor, National Jewish Health (NJH). In March of 2021, this incentive was increased, and two additional incentive protocols were launched to increase quit attempts by Vermonters in these specific populations.

Methods: To increase quit attempts among disparate populations, the Vermont Tobacco Program increased and expanded financial incentives opportunities in 2021 for completed quitline coaching sessions:

- The pregnancy and post-partum protocol, with increased incentives up to \$250.
- The Medicaid/uninsured protocol, with incentives up to \$150.
- The menthol tobacco protocol, with incentives up to \$50.

Vermont is the only NJH client using all three incentives to increase quitline enrollment and the conversion rate from first-time callers to callers completing the maximum number of counseling sessions. Paid digital media campaigns, tailored to reach clinicians and Medicaid insured/uninsured who use tobacco, were marketed to increase awareness of the new and enhanced incentives and drive enrollment.

Figure 1: Comparison of the effect of no incentives (2020) and incentives (2021) on total number of calls per month from March-June.



Results: From March through June 2021, incentives were distributed to four pregnant/post-partum callers, 30 menthol callers, and 155 Medicaid/uninsured callers. Among pregnant/post-partum callers to 802Quits, there was a 75% increase in calls 1-5 and a 50% increase in calls 6-10 over previous year. Comparing March through June 2021 call data over previous year, 802Quits recorded an increase of 16.8% for first-time callers and 6.9% for calls 2-5, with an overall increase in call volumes of 10.5%.

Conclusions: Implementation of financial incentives through 802Quits resulted in an increased completion of counseling sessions, which indicates an increased likelihood of Vermonter's quitting tobacco.

Table 1	Medicaid	Menthol	Pregnancy
Call 1	\$20	\$10	\$20
Call 2	\$20	---	\$20
Call 3	\$20	\$20	\$20
Call 4	\$30	---	\$20
Call 5	\$60	\$30	\$20
Call 6	---	---	\$30
Call 7	---	---	\$30
Call 8	---	---	\$30
Call 9	---	---	\$30
Call 10	---	---	\$30
Total Incentive	\$150	\$60	\$250

Table 1: Structure of incentives for each counselling sessions offered through 802Quits.

