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Study: Tobacco Prevention, Cessation Saved Thousands of Lives, Billions of Dollars in Minnesota

Research shows need for continuing investment as tobacco control funding dwindles

MINNEAPOLIS (8/20/19) – A new study by Minnesota researchers found positive effects from a comprehensive statewide tobacco control program, including more than 4,000 lives saved and over \$5 billion in saved health care and productivity costs. Conducted by HealthPartners Institute and ClearWay MinnesotaSM, the research validates two decades' worth of smoking prevention and cessation efforts at a time when funding for such efforts will soon run out.

"These findings show the importance of investing in tobacco prevention and cessation, both statewide and locally," said study coauthor Ann St. Claire, Director of Evaluation and Survey Research at ClearWay Minnesota. "The benefits of tobacco control efforts accrue gradually over time, and we know that even now the impact of these programs is continuing to grow. But with the impending end of ClearWay Minnesota, big changes are on the horizon. In order for these effects to continue growing, Minnesota will need to continue and expand similar efforts into the future."

ClearWay Minnesota, a nonprofit organization created by Minnesota's tobacco settlement, currently provides nearly 70 percent of total funding for cessation and prevention efforts around the state, but the organization is set to sunset in 2022.

Published in the journal *Tobacco Control*, the study examines ModelHealthTM Tobacco: Minnesota, a microsimulation model that used smoking prevalence rates to estimate the impact of tobacco control programs and quantify savings from smokers who quit or never started. The researchers used data from 1998 to 2017 to calculate their findings.

The research found that because of Minnesota's strong tobacco prevention and cessation programs:

- 4,560 cancers were prevented
- 31,691 hospitalizations for smoking-attributable cardiovascular disease and diabetes were prevented
- 12,881 hospitalizations for smoking-attributable respiratory disease were prevented
- 4,118 smoking-attributable deaths were prevented
- \$2.7 billion in medical care costs was saved
- \$2.4 billion in worker productivity was saved

"For decades, the success of Minnesota's investment in tobacco control has largely been measured through smoking rates," said Michael Maciosek, Ph.D., the HealthPartners Institute economist who led the study. "Now for the first time, we have conclusive proof that such efforts truly are preventing disease, saving individuals and employers money, and helping people live longer, healthier lives on a large scale."

For 20 years, Minnesota has enjoyed one of the most comprehensive tobacco control programs in the nation. Partnerships between state agencies, nonprofits and health insurers have established free quitting resources for Minnesota smokers, helped pass public policies protecting Minnesotans from secondhand smoke and making

tobacco products less accessible to youth, funded outreach among diverse communities and created powerful media campaigns, among other achievements.

More info: <https://tobaccocontrol.bmj.com/content/early/2019/08/14/tobaccocontrol-2018-054825.full>

About HealthPartners Institute

HealthPartners Institute is part of HealthPartners, the largest consumer-governed, nonprofit health care organization in the nation with a mission to improve health and wellbeing in partnership with members, patients and the community. HealthPartners Institute supports this mission through research, education and practice. The Institute annually conducts 400+ research studies, provides continuing medical education to 26,000 health professionals and trains 700+ medical residents and fellows and 1,200+ medical and advanced practice students. The Institute also supports clinical quality improvement and patient education programs. Its integration with HealthPartners' hospitals, clinics and health plan strengthens the Institute's ability to discover and develop evidence-based solutions and translate them into practice. Based in Minneapolis, the Institute's work impacts care, health and well-being across the region and nation as well as internationally. For more information, visit healthpartnersinstitute.org.

About ClearWay MinnesotaSM

ClearWay Minnesota is an independent, nonprofit organization that improves the health of Minnesotans by reducing the harm caused by tobacco. ClearWay Minnesota serves Minnesota through its grant-making program, QUITPLAN[®] stop-smoking services and statewide outreach activities. It is funded with 3 percent of the state's 1998 tobacco settlement. For more information on ClearWay Minnesota or QUITPLAN Services, call 952-767-1400 or visit www.clearwaymn.org.

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