



# European Association for Cancer Education

## 32nd Annual Scientific Meeting

### **Moving Evidence Into Action: Creation Of A Tobacco Cessation Program in a Safety Net Healthcare System**

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#### **BACKGROUND/PURPOSE:**

Tobacco abuse has decreased in the general population in the US over the past half century due to aggressive media campaigns, increased awareness, education, and federal policy. However, tobacco products continue to cause morbidity and mortality, particularly in areas of low socioeconomic status. The FreshStart® program is an evidence-based series of lectures and activities targeting tobacco use to encourage smoking cessation and maintenance of a smoke-free life.

#### **DESCRIPTION:**

The FreshStart® program was adapted by the Grady Health Systems Department of Otolaryngology and incorporated into clinics. This urban, public hospital provides care to primarily indigent patients. Participants are screened for tobacco use at three stages: triage, check-in, and the provider visit. If the patient smokes, a notification is created in the EMR. At each stage, the patient is asked if they would like to enroll in the FreshStart® program. If the invitation is declined, this process begins again at their next visit.

#### **EVALUATION:**

Activities are used to engage the participant and encourage critical thinking. Each activity allows dialogue between participants and facilitator so that patient-specific details can be discussed. After each lesson, participants complete questionnaires that gauge understanding, subjective effectiveness, and satisfaction. Sustainability and modification measures are presented to ensure appropriate changes to the curriculum based on current data and patient comments. To date, approximately 500 individuals have registered for the Smoking Cessation Program. The inclusion of the three-step invitation/intervention has resulted in an approximately 50% increase in the acceptance rate of joining the program. Of those completing the program, 59.2% have been tobacco free for longer than 1 year. The successfulness of this program has led to the expansion to the entire hospital system. The FreshStart® curriculum is standardized and easily transferrable among communities and healthcare institutions.

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