

STOP Program for smokers trying to quit

To help in their attempts to quit, smokers in Halton have the opportunity to enroll in the Smoking Treatment for Ontario Patients (STOP) Program and receive free nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) in the form of patches.

“Working with our community partners to help promote healthy living in Halton is a key priority for Regional Council,” said Halton Regional Chair Gary Carr. “As the year draws to a close, I encourage smokers in Halton to consider taking steps to healthier living by exploring this innovative program and the other supports available through the Region.”

For many smokers, the cost of nicotine replacement products can be a barrier to quitting. The STOP Program provides five weeks of free NRT. NRT is a practical support for alleviation of nicotine

withdrawal symptoms and has been shown to be effective in helping people to quit smoking.

Those interested in participating in the STOP Program may do so by attending a STOP workshop. STOP workshops will be held in Milton and Oakville on Wednesday, January 9. To see if they are eligible to participate, and to register for the workshop(s), residents should call the Halton Region Health Department by dialing 311 or 905-825-6000, toll free 1-866-442-5866 or TTY 905-827-9833.

The STOP Program is conducted by the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH), and is funded by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care as part of its Smoke-Free Ontario Strategy.

“In addition to providing nicotine replacement, the STOP Program will

offer educational materials to encourage the participants to make broader changes that can improve their overall health,” said Dr. Bob Nosal, Medical Officer of Health for Halton Region. “Often smoking does not occur in isolation and can be accompanied by other risk factors for disease such as poor nutrition and lack of physical activity.”

To date, results for STOP participants have shown an improvement of at least two times the typical quit rates.

Introduced in 2005, through a partnership between the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health and the Ministry of Health Promotion and Sport, the STOP Program has already provided nicotine replacement therapy, free of charge, along with counselling support to 80,000 people from across Ontario.

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