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## STOP Program: Support for Halton smokers who want to quit

Smokers in Halton have the opportunity to join smokers from across Ontario to enrol in the Smoking Treatment for Ontario Patients (STOP) Program and receive nicotine replacement therapy (NRT), free of charge to help them in their attempt to quit smoking.

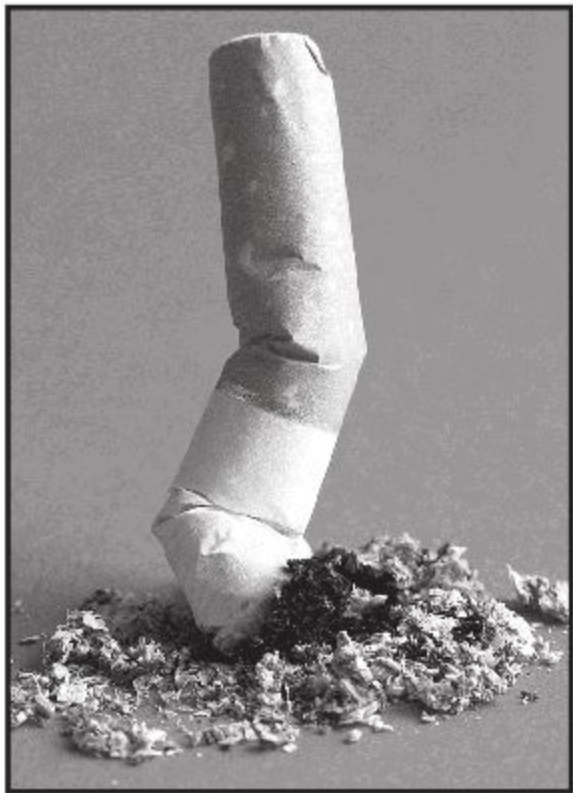
"Promoting healthy living is a key priority identified in the Citizens' Priorities - Halton Region's 2011-2014 Action Plan," said Halton Regional Chair Gary Carr. "Halton Region is working with CAMH to implement the STOP Program in Halton, ultimately to help prevent chronic disease."

For many smokers the cost of nicotine replacement products is a barrier to quitting. The evidence-based STOP Program provides five weeks of free NRT. NRT is a practical support for alleviation of nicotine withdrawal symptoms, and has been demonstrated to be effective in helping individuals stop smoking.

Those interested in participating in the STOP program may do so by attending a STOP workshop. STOP workshops will be held at locations in Milton and Burlington on Tuesday, December 13. To see if you are eligible to participate, and to

register for the workshop(s), call the Halton Region Health Department by dialling 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), Canada's leading addiction and mental health teaching hospital, and is funded by the Ministry of Health Promotion and Sport as part of its Smoke-Free Ontario Strategy.

"While smoking rates have declined over the past 20

years, 1.6-million Ontarians continue to smoke, and 16,000 die each year from the effects of commercial tobacco products," said Dr. Bob Nosal Medical Officer of Health for Halton Region. "Tobacco is a major cause or contributor to all of the five top causes of death in Halton Region. Proven smoking cessation support programs such as STOP can help bring those numbers even lower."

To date, results for STOP participants have shown an improvement of at least two times the typical quit rates. In addition to providing NRT, STOP will offer educational material to encourage the program participants to make broader changes that can improve their health even more, because often smoking does not occur in isolation, but rather accompanies other risk factors for disease, such as poor nutrition and lack of physical activity.

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, in addition to counselling support to an unprecedented 68,000 people from across Ontario.

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