Rhode Island’s Progress on Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Development (September 2014)

Tobacco Cessation Coverage Assessments
Rhode Island completed the State Tobacco Cessation Coverage Assessment with the support of the Department of Health (the Department) staff. A survey to assess health plan coverage of tobacco cessation was developed and implemented in collaboration with the Statewide Tobacco Cessation Committee, which includes representatives from the largest health plans. The report is available upon request.

State as an Employer
The Department is in discussion with the State’s Employees Health Benefits Office about the need for the state to cover state quitline (RI Smoker’s Helpline) costs for their employees. Periodically, the Employees Health Benefits Office partners with the Health Department to promote the Smoker’s Helpline to state employees. This past partnership has set the stage for further collaboration. The Department of Health anticipates that the state as an employer will move forward with a quitline cost-sharing partnership in early 2015.

Employers
The Department has surveyed large employers about their cessation benefits and has begun to identify opportunities for collaboration. During the fall of 2014, the Department will host a Statewide Tobacco Cessation Roundtable to educate and engage employers in establishing cost-sharing partnerships with the state quitline. Information on the benefits and opportunities for return-on-investment of evidence-based cessation services, benefits of cost-sharing partnerships and the effectiveness of the RI Smoker’s Helpline will be presented. Collateral material outlining the information presented will be developed and distributed to employers statewide.

Health Plans
The Department has surveyed four major health insurers in RI to determine the cessation benefits offered to their members. Health insurers in RI are mandated by state legislation to provide the Department with an annual report that summarizes member utilization of their cessation benefits. The Department plans to engage health insurers similarly to the efforts with large employers -- inviting them to the Statewide Tobacco Cessation Roundtable, establishing a cost sharing partnership with the RI’s Helpline and educating them on the benefits and return-on-investment of tobacco cessation services. Collateral material will also be shared with the health insurers, as well.

Coalitions/Summits
Currently, the Department of Health staff assists in convening the Statewide Tobacco Cessation Committee. This Committee is a collective of professionals from local/state agencies, community agencies, and healthcare providers. The Committee meets quarterly with the goals of ensuring that all Rhode Islanders have access to and utilize cessation services that are offered across the state, improving reimbursement for all evidence-based tobacco cessation services delivered by qualified providers, integrating cessation treatment and referral into health systems and sharing the costs of other cessation services.

Broker Engagement
Currently, the Department of Health has not engaged brokers. Brokers will be invited to attend the Statewide Tobacco Cessation Roundtable.

Resource Development
Rhode Island developed a Tobacco Cessation Benefits Health Plan Survey (using the Colorado survey as a model) for the health insurers to provide information on cessation benefits offered and member utilization of benefits. In addition, collateral materials as stated above will be developed over the next several months.

Medicaid Match
Currently, RI has not secured a Medicaid match. The Department of Health has prioritized strengthening relationships with relevant state agencies, and in particular, working more collaboratively with the state’s Medicaid office and pursuing joint opportunities to obtain funding to partner with the RI Smoker’s Helpline.

Staff Training
Currently, the Department has a staff person working part-time on the NAQC public-private partnership (PPP) initiative and has plans to contract with a consultant to assist and to facilitate the Statewide Tobacco Cessation Roundtable. The staff person and the Tobacco Control Program Manager participate in the PPP technical assistance and training opportunities.