

Smoke-free Public Housing: HELPING SMOKERS QUIT

Newsletter #2: Moving Forward

Since our [inaugural newsletter](#), which explained more about our smoke-free public housing initiative, was sent in September, we've been working furiously to prepare for and launch the project within the selected communities. By late 2018, we were ready to get to work with the participating organizations:

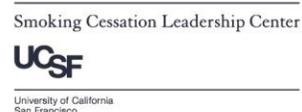


Kick-off meeting a success

Stakeholders met in Atlanta Jan. 8-9 for a collaborative meeting to get to know each other, set community goals and metrics, determine next steps, get access to helpful resources, and learn more about [Project ECHO](#)[®]. During the day-and-a-half meeting, participants broke out into their communities for action planning and spoke with subject matter experts, as well as breaking out sector by sector to come up with priority actions to answer this essential question: What do we need to help more people make a quit attempt? The action planning and prioritization will help inform their local work and contribute to our creation of best practices to help residents of public housing access tobacco cessation services and quit smoking for good.



South Carolina participants take part in action planning



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Subject matter experts included Robert Burns from the [National Center for Health in Public Housing](#) and Arnold Downing, Sr., vice president of leasing and resident services at the Topeka (KS) Housing Authority. Mr. Burns' expertise regarding health centers that are located in or are immediately accessible to public housing created great conversations. Mr. Downing's housing authority successfully enacted the smoke-free rule within months of its release and had a lot of good advice for the housing authorities in attendance. Although he couldn't be in Atlanta with us, Alan Geller, MPH, RN, from Harvard University [spoke on video](#) about what researchers learned from housing agencies that went smoke-free in advance of the official HUD smoke-free policy.



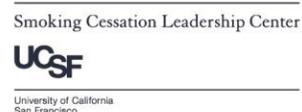
Smoke-free Public Housing Tobacco Cessation ECHO



The 50 participants also learned more about [Project ECHO](#)[®], the online virtual learning collaborative through which much of the project's discussions, problem solving, and best-practice sharing will take place. During the course of the year, we'll hold 26 ECHO sessions that will allow all stakeholders and subject matter experts to come together via video on the Zoom platform. These ECHOs will consist of a short instructive presentation by different expert speakers followed by case presentations, and a community will report progress on their action plans created at the kickoff meeting.

Case presentations

Each ECHO session will feature a case presentation from one of the organizations participating in the project. Participating community health centers, public housing agencies, and state health department quitlines will present 2-3 cases throughout the year to get input from our expert faculty and other participants to improve tobacco cessation services in their setting.





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In ECHO sessions, cases typically focus on an individual patient for a clinical audience. What's especially compelling about our Smoke-free Public Housing Cessation ECHO sessions is that case presentations could focus on individuals, but they can also focus on the greater systems change issues that need to be addressed.

To allow for systems-based discussions, we developed a new case presentation form to help identify and break down the concerns. Both individual and systems cases will spur discussion among the subject experts and other project participants to help participants uncover and develop solutions to their challenges.

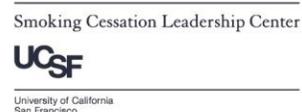
ECHO schedule and faculty

ECHO sessions began Jan. 22 and will run every two weeks until Jan. 21, 2020. Each instructive presentation will be presented by a member of our expert Smoke-free Public Housing Tobacco Cessation ECHO core or ad hoc faculty. Faculty include: Dr. Steve Schroeder from the Smoking Cessation Leadership Center at UCSF; Linda Bailey, JD, MHS, from the North American Quitline Consortium; Amy Skora from the University of Wisconsin Center for Tobacco Research and Intervention; Frank Vitale, MA, of the Pharmacy Partnership for Tobacco Cessation; Richard Wender, MD, Cliff Douglas, JD, and Jeffrey Drope, PhD, from the American Cancer Society; Anne DiGuilio from the American Lung Association; Deborah Thrope, JD, from the National Housing Law Project; and others.

Each ECHO session is designed to appeal to the three varied audiences of our project participants, who are both clinical and non-clinical. A full schedule of our ECHO sessions can be found [here](#). ECHO sessions are intended for project participants only, but you can request recordings of each session and get first access to the write-ups of best practices in Spring 2020 by emailing [Becky Slemons](#).

Helpful information

- Although the December-January US federal government shutdown is over, the [National Housing Law Project](#), a fellow RWJF grantee dedicated to advance housing justice for poor people and communities, developed [legal analysis of the shutdown's impact](#) on federally-assisted tenants. While the memo is intended for their audience of mostly lawyers, it includes talking points for advocates to address the shutdown's impact on tenants/clients/patients. It does not specifically address implementation of the smoke-free rule but notes that some PHA functions may be delayed due to the shutdown, particularly those that require HUD approval. With another potential shutdown looming, this information can be helpful in understanding the possible impact of the lack of federal funding on public and rent-assisted housing.
- Look for American Cancer Society staff at the [2019 MetaECHO conference](#) in March in Albuquerque, NM, to present a poster about recruitment for this project.



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- Live Smoke Free, of the Association for Nonsmokers-Minnesota, has updated the [Global Directory of Smoke-Free Housing Programs](#) to assist those working on smoke-free housing worldwide better connect with each other.
- The National Alliance of Resident Services in Affordable and Assisted Housing (NAR-SAAH) will be administering a resident survey during February and March to collect information on experiences with the implementation of smoke-free housing. This 15-minute telephone survey will be administered to attendees from the 2018 NAR-SAAH conference and to other resident leaders they have worked with through outreach to public housing authorities. The results will be posted on the [NAR-SAAH website](#), discussed at upcoming resident conferences, and disseminated to partnering agencies.
- SCLC is offering FREE CME/CEUs for our recorded webinar bundles. Each collection includes up to 14 CEUs and up to 10 webinars. Visit [SCLC's website](#) for more information, and use the discount code HUD20 to waive the fee!
- SCLC is also offering FREE Quit Now cards to help promote the national quitline service to smokers, family members, and providers. Quitlines are toll-free numbers to connect callers to trained coaches who provide information advice, support, and help with quitting at their state quitline, based on their area code. For clinicians, they provide an easy, fast, and effective way to help smokers quit. By simply identifying smokers, advising them to quit, and sending them to a free telephone service, clinicians can save thousands of lives. Over the last few years, the Ask, Advise, Refer model has become an accepted way of implementing the USPHS Clinical Practice Guideline and the 1-800-QUIT NOW “Blue card” has entered the mainstream of cessation efforts. There are over 5 million QUIT NOW cards in circulation and all types of health professionals, counselors, and peers currently use the approach and the card to help smokers quit. [Order your FREE Quit Now cards](#) today.
- Clean Air for All: The Smoke-Free Public Housing Project invites you to join us for the webinar *Boosting Compliance and Improving Enforcement in Smoke-Free Public Housing*, Thursday February 21, 12:30-2ET. HUD’s smoke-free public housing rule has been in effect for several months, but policy success takes commitment to promoting compliance and enforcement moving forward. Join Clean Air for All and special guests for a discussion on strategies to boost compliance, aid enforcement, and change the narrative around smoking in public housing communities. Learn tips and best practices for handling violations and working with residents toward a common goal of healthy, clean, and safe housing. [Register for the webinar here](#).



To Learn More

For more information about Smoke-free Public Housing: Helping Smokers Quit, contact [Becky Slemons](#), director, Tobacco Cessation in Public Housing Initiative and visit smokefreePHA.org.

