

**From:** Agency Info, <AgencyInfo@gov.sc.gov>  
**To:** Veldran, KatherineKatherineVeldran@gov.sc.gov  
Smith, AustinAustinSmith@gov.sc.gov  
**Date:** 11/16/2016 11:02:04 AM  
**Subject:** FW: DHEC Helps South Carolinians Kick the Habit with Free Resources and Support

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**From:** S.C. DHEC  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 16, 2016 11:01:39 AM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)  
**To:** Agency Info,  
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For Immediate Release  
Nov. 16, 2016

Contact: DHEC Media Relations  
[media@dhec.sc.gov](mailto:media@dhec.sc.gov)  
803.898.7769

## DHEC Helps South Carolinians Kick the Habit with Free Resources and Support

COLUMBIA, S.C. - The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) reminds smokers and tobacco users that the Great American Smokeout (GASO) on November 17 offers the perfect opportunity to take advantage of cessation resources available through the S.C. Tobacco Quitline.

Sponsored by the American Cancer Society, GASO encourages smokers to quit for 24 hours and to make a plan for quitting permanently. DHEC's S.C. Tobacco Quitline, which is celebrating its 10-year anniversary, can help South Carolinians with one-on-one telephone coaching, web-based and text message support, assistance developing a personalized quit plan, and free nicotine replacement therapy to eligible callers.

"For a decade, DHEC's statewide Quitline has provided free tobacco treatment and cessation counseling services to nearly 100,000 tobacco users in South Carolina," said Sharon Biggers, director of DHEC's Division of Tobacco Prevention and Control. "Our agency is committed to promoting and protecting the health of all South Carolinians by helping tobacco users quit, preventing tobacco use and reducing the exposure to secondhand smoke."

All South Carolinians who call the Quitline are guaranteed at least one free session with a trained quit coach and receive a Quit Kit. Callers who are uninsured, underinsured, are on Medicare or Medicaid, or are under age 18 are eligible for up to five free sessions with a quit coach, and pregnant/postpartum tobacco users can get up to 10 free

sessions. Online enrollment and 24/7 hours of operation have been introduced this year to increase accessibility.

"Anytime is a good time to quit, but the Great American Smokeout is the perfect opportunity to turn over a new leaf," said Biggers. "Call today and quit for keeps."

Smokers seeking assistance can reach the S.C. Tobacco Quitline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669), or for services in Spanish, call 1-855-DÉJELO-YA (1-855-335-3569).

#### **10 Years of Quitline Success:**

- 110,841 calls received
- 37% had no health insurance
- 21% had Medicaid
- 32% remained tobacco-free after 7-months
- 52% were tobacco users with a chronic condition, such as asthma, COPD, diabetes, coronary artery disease or cancer
- 45% had a co-occurring mental health condition, like depression or anxiety, or a substance use disorder

For more information, visit <http://www.scdhec.gov/QuitForKeeps>.

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S.C. Department of Health & Environmental Control, 2600 Bull St., Columbia, SC 29201

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