Template Letter to the Editor — Quit Line Text Enrollment

Drafted July 17, 2020

Note – Copy in all caps is only intended as a prompt. Please customize your letter for your community

**COVID-19 provides new motivation to quit smoking, new text number makes it easier to get help**

Dear Editor,

START YOUR LETTER BY SHARING THAT MANY SMOKERS ARE NOW CONSIDERING QUITTING TOBACCO FOR A NEW REASON – BECAUSE SMOKING CAN LEAD TO MORE SEVERE ILLNESS FROM COVID-19. SHARE THAT BOTH THE CDC AND THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO) HAVE IDENTIFIED THAT THOSE WHO SMOKE ARE AT GREATER RISK OF MORE SEVERE SYMPTOMS FROM COVID-19, PROVIDING A NEW IN AN ALREADY LONG LIST OF REASONS TO QUIT. THE GOOD NEWS FOR THEM IS THAT FREE HELP TO QUIT IS JUST A TEXT AWAY.

SHARE THAT TOBACCO USERS THAT WANT TO QUIT CAN NOW TEXT “READY” TO 200-400 TO ENROLL IN FREE QUIT SERVICES THROUGH THE WISCONSIN TOBACCO QUIT LINE. ONCE SOMEONE TEXTS “READY” TO 200-400, THEY WILL RECEIVE THREE SIMPLE TEXT MESSAGES ASKING FOR NAME, ZIP CODE, AND PERMISSION FOR THE QUIT LINE TO LEAVE THEM A MESSAGE.FROM THERE, THE QUIT LINE WILL TRY TO CONTACT THEM BY PHONE FOR THE NEXT 48 HOURS TO GET THEM ENROLLED IN FREE QUIT SERVICES. AN INDIVIDUAL MAY TEXT “STOP” AT ANY TIME IF THEY DECIDE THEY ARE NOT READY TO QUIT.

THE BENEFITS TO QUITTING SMOKING ARE AS MANY AS THE REASONS TO QUIT IN THE FIRST PLACE. **(PROVIDE SOME EXAMPLES OF IMMEDIATE AND LONG-TERM BENEFITS OF QUITTING – YOU CAN FIND THEM AT** [**https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/quit\_smoking/how\_to\_quit/benefits/index.htm**](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/quit_smoking/how_to_quit/benefits/index.htm)**)**.

CLOSE YOUR LETTER BY ENCOURAGING THOSE WHO ARE READY TO QUIT SMOKING TO CONTACT THE QUIT LINE BY TEXTING “READY” TO 200-400 OR CALLING 1-800-QUIT NOW (784-8669).