National Health Disparities Month Template LTE

Drafted March 30, 2021

**In the age of COVID, it’s more important than ever to address tobacco disparities**

Dear Editor,

START BY SHARING THAT APRIL IS NATIONAL HEALTH DISPARITIES MONTH, WHICH RAISES AWARENESS ABOUT HEALTH DISPARITIES THAT CONTINUE TO AFFECT RACIAL AND ETHNIC MINORITY POPULATIONS. SHARE THAT IT’S MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER TO ADDRESS HEALTH DISPARITIES, AND THAT TOBACCO USE DISPARITIES ARE A GOOD PLACE TO START.

INFORM READERS THAT PEOPLE OF COLOR ARE MORE LIKELY TO LIVE IN NEIGHBORHOODS WITH A GREATER NUMBER OF TOBACCO RETAILERS. WHEN YOU PAIR THIS WITH TARGETED MARKETING FROM TOBACCO COMPANIES, IT’S NOT SURPRISING THAT CERTAIN POPULATIONS SMOKE AT RATES HIGHER THAN THE STATE AVERAGE.

THE KNOWN HEALTH EFFECTS OF SMOKING ([**INSERT EXAMPLES**](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/health_effects/effects_cig_smoking/index.htm)) ARE ALREADY REASON ENOUGH TO ADDRESS THESE HEALTH DISPARITIES, BUT COVID MAKES THIS EVEN MORE OF A PRIORITY. POPULATIONS FACING HEALTH DISPARITIES ARE ALREADY AT A GREATER RISK FOR COVID, BUT TALK ABOUT HOW THAT RISK IS MADE GREATER BY SMOKING (**YOU CAN PULL FROM HERE:** [**https://tobwis.org/resources/view/498/Tobacco\_COVID\_and\_Racism\_FINAL.pdf?\_sm\_au\_=iDVJ0CJ5MQ3WkM1HBLQtvK7BJGKjp**](https://tobwis.org/resources/view/498/Tobacco_COVID_and_Racism_FINAL.pdf?_sm_au_=iDVJ0CJ5MQ3WkM1HBLQtvK7BJGKjp)).

DISCUSS HOW YOUR ALLIANCE/ORGANIZATION IS ADDRESSING TOBACCO-RELATED DISPARITIES. THIS COULD INCLUDE PARTNERSHIPS, PRESENTATIONS, EVENTS, AND OTHER ACTIVITIES.

CLOSE BY INVITING OTHERS TO JOIN YOUR GROUP IN ADDRESSING TOBACCO-RELATED DISPARITIES IN **(COMMUNITY NAME)** BY VISITING YOUR GROUP AT YOUR **(URL, SOCIAL MEDIA URL, ETC)**.

LET PEOPLE WHO USE TOBACCO KNOW THAT FREE HELP IS AVAILABLE BY CALLING 1-800-QUIT NOW (784-8669). OR, IF THEY’RE ON MEDICAID, THEY CAN TALK TO THEIR DOCTOR ABOUT THE RESOURCES AVAILABLE THROUGH THE MEDICAID CESSATION BENEFIT.