

# Continue the good.

*The importance of addressing tobacco use with your behavioral health patients.*



**Quit Now**  
**Virginia**

Tobacco User Quitline

+1 (800) QUIT NOW | +1 (800) 784-8669 | [QuitNow.net/Virginia](https://QuitNow.net/Virginia)

A woman with short, dark, curly hair is shown in profile, facing right. She has a tattoo on her neck and shoulder that reads "C. VIII. MC". She is wearing a dark green tank top and a small stud earring. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

You helped her  
quit drinking,  
help her quit  
smoking too.

*"I smoked for ten years. Alcohol and cigarettes came hand in hand. I thought I was never going to stop. It was kind of hard at first, but I'm glad I did stop. I'm living a better life, saving money, and saving myself for the long run."*

— Alvin, recovering from substance abuse

## Save your money.

You supported them on the road to recovery.  
Make quitting tobacco part of the journey.

You work hard to help in your patients' recovery. You help them deal with alcoholism, substance use, depression, anxiety, and more. Yet sometimes treating tobacco use gets put on the back burner.

Studies show that helping patients quit tobacco use at the same time that you're treating other behavioral health conditions helps with long term recovery. **Most patients really want to quit smoking and want your help to do it.**

### People with behavioral health conditions:

- are more likely to smoke
- are more likely to smoke more often
- account for nearly half of tobacco-related deaths

Her depression is hard to overcome. Quitting smoking can help.



*"My boyfriend and I quit together. I feel like it's been a good journey for me. I've improved my health. My boyfriend and I are able to help each other along the way. It's great to have someone to stand by your side."*

— Clare, living with mental illness

## What's the harm?

Smoking may seem like it helps your patients get by, but it can actually make things worse.

Tobacco use can be undoing much of the good you're hoping to achieve with your patients. Research shows that smoking is associated with worse symptoms and outcomes, including greater depression, greater likelihood of psychiatric hospitalization, increased suicidal behavior, and substance abuse relapse.

Smoking can also interact with psychiatric medications, often resulting in the need for higher doses to achieve the same benefit as those don't smoke.

Waiting to deal with tobacco use can be detrimental and dangerous to your patients' health.

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**FACT:** Continuing to smoke can hinder other treatments for those with behavioral health conditions.

A photograph of a man with short dark hair and a beard, wearing a grey t-shirt, holding a baby. The man is looking down at the baby with a gentle expression. The baby is wearing a white long-sleeved shirt and yellow polka-dot pants. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

Helping him to  
quit smoking  
while in recovery  
helps more than  
just him.

*"My doctor said the best thing I can do for my health is to quit smoking. I want to be around to see my children get married."*

*— Joann, recovering from substance abuse*

## **Achieve more positive outcomes.**

**Quitting smoking helps your patients feel better.  
It also helps them recover better.**

Quitting smoking has been shown to improve mental health. Better yet, studies prove quitting smoking actually supports other behavioral health treatments and can aid in overall recovery.

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### ***Quitting smoking is associated with:***

- A decrease in depression, anxiety, and stress, and an increase in quality of life
- An increase in long-term abstinence from alcohol and other drugs, and a reduction in substance use disorder relapse
- A dramatic reduction in the risk of heart disease, stroke, and cancer
- Better outcomes for opioid-addicted patients undergoing methadone detoxification

**FACT:** The National Alliance on Mental illness (NAMI) encourages smoke-free environments and advocates for access to smoking cessation programs.

“Treat tobacco dependence like any other disease, and get to know the person with that disease. Once you’ve identified that then you can begin to individualize a plan with them. If you don’t have the resources, use the quitline. Tell your patient to call 1-800-Quit-Now and get on the program.”

— Dr. Galiatsatos

## Continue the good.

Help your patients quit tobacco for good. For free.  
Talk to your patients about quitting tobacco.

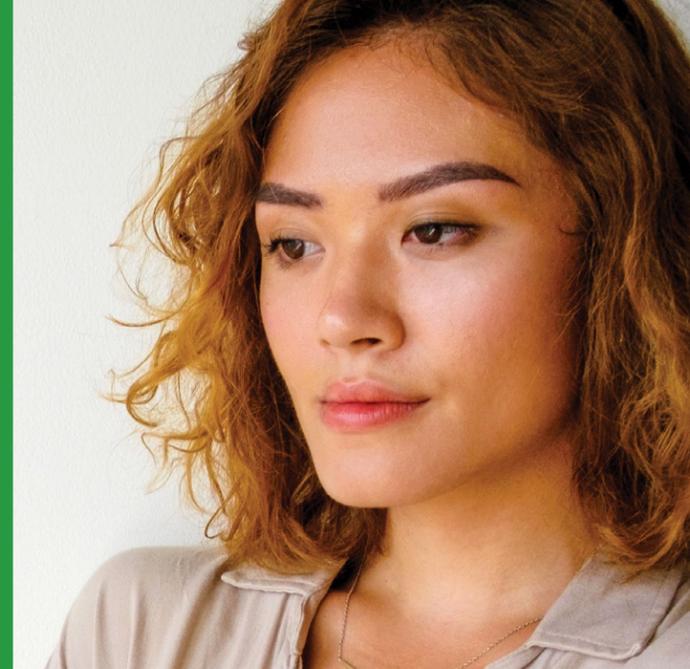
Refer patients to the free Virginia quitline. Call **1-800-Quit-Now** or visit **QuitNow.net/Virginia**.

Learn more about current research at **www.BHtheChange.org/resources**.

Connect clients to their local health department for additional support by directing them to **www.VDH.Virginia.gov/tobacco-free-living**.

### WHAT IS THE QUITLINE?

The Virginia quitline is a free phone, web, and text message program funded by the Virginia Department of Health offering highly trained Quit Coaches to work one-on-one with your patients. Services are provided in English, Spanish, and additional languages.



## The Virginia Tobacco Quitline

- Is a free service provided by the Virginia Department of Health
- Provides tobacco treatment to Virginia residents over age 13 to quit all tobacco including electronic smoking devices (e-cigarettes/vapes)
- Is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by phone, web, and text
- Offers free Nicotine Replacement Therapy for those 18 and older (while supplies last)
- Links callers with a professional trained to help them quit using tobacco
- Offers specialized programs for those with behavioral health conditions, including substance use. (About half of all quitline callers have self-reported one or more behavioral health conditions.)
- Offers specialized programs for those with chronic conditions, pregnancy, and youth ages 13-17
- Has a 7x higher quit rate than quitting on your own and over a 93% satisfaction rate

To learn more about how the quitline can benefit your patients, visit **QuitNow.net/Virginia** or call 1-800-Quit-Now.

To register your practice as a referral site with the quitline contact **Rita.Miller@vdh.virginia.gov**.



There's no better  
time than now  
to help someone  
quit smoking.

## Ask, Advise, Refer

The Virginia Department of Health offers effective tools and resources to assist you in helping your patients quit smoking. Remember, many patients want to quit smoking and want your help to do so.

For additional resources please visit [www.VDH.Virginia.gov/tobacco-free-living](http://www.VDH.Virginia.gov/tobacco-free-living).

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