

## A new cessation program introduced to help tobacco users quit

Written by

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ClearWay Minnesota recently launched a new version of QUITPLAN Services, the free cessation program available to any Minnesotan who wants to quit tobacco. The new services now include free access to text messages, email support, a downloadable quit guide and free "starter kits," which provide a two-week supply of nicotine patches, gum or lozenges to help tobacco users quit. In addition, tobacco users can now speak to a quit coach over the phone 24 hours a day, seven days a week for support and help quitting.

QUITPLAN Services was originally launched by ClearWay Minnesota in 2001 and has provided help to more than 100,000 Minnesotans trying to quit tobacco. Started as a phone helpline, QUITPLAN Services added an online program at [quitplan.com](http://quitplan.com) in 2003. Today, QUITPLAN Services provides access to tools in both English and Spanish online at [quitplan.com](http://quitplan.com) or through the QUITPLAN Helpline at 1-888-354-PLAN.

"QUITPLAN Services provides one of the most comprehensive programs for tobacco users to quit and we're very excited about the new features," said David Willoughby, Chief Executive Officer of ClearWay Minnesota, a nonprofit organization dedicated to reducing tobacco's harm in Minnesota. "We hope Minnesotans will appreciate the new available tools and take advantage of all the new options to quit. Our goal with these new services is to make it as easy as possible for all Minnesotans to access and get exactly the help they need."

In Minnesota, approximately 625,000 adults and 77,000 kids are current smokers. Smoking is the leading cause of preventable death and disease in the state and costs Minnesota nearly \$3 billion in excess medical costs every year. According to research by ClearWay Minnesota and the Centers for Disease Control, cessation treatment programs are an integral part of a comprehensive effort to reduce smoking rates that also include smoke-free laws, tobacco price increases, mass media campaigns and strong youth access laws.

"We know that the majority of smokers want to quit and many have tried unsuccessfully in the past," said Willoughby. "ClearWay Minnesota conducted extensive research with tobacco users throughout the state to find out how to provide exactly the type of support they want. The new services provide help to Minnesotans in any stage of quitting, whether they are just thinking about quitting, in the process of quitting or already quit and seeking support."

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Minnesotans can find out about all the free help to quit tobacco through QUITPLAN Services by visiting [quitplan.com](http://quitplan.com) or calling 1-888-354-PLAN (7526).