

A Call for **ACTION**

(Access to Cessation Treatment for Tobacco In Our Nation): An Action Plan to Address the Lack of Access to Tobacco-Use Treatment

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE HEALTH INSURERS AND HEALTH PLANS

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the U.S. Public Health Service (PHS), and the National Business Group on Health have recommended that all tobacco users have access to comprehensive, evidence-based benefits that give them the best chance to successfully quit. As defined by the CDC, a comprehensive tobacco cessation benefit includes:

- Coverage of at least four counseling sessions (individual, group, or telephone) of at least 30 minutes each.
- Coverage of all FDA-approved prescription and over-the-counter medications.
- Coverage of both counseling and medications for at least two quit attempts per year.
- Elimination or minimization of co-pays or deductibles for counseling and medications.

Actions that Public and Private Health Insurers/Health Plans Can Take

- Provide comprehensive coverage for all treatments recommended by the PHS tobacco-use treatment guideline into all health plan offerings (individual, group, or telephone counseling, prescription medications, and over-the-counter medications) and inform eligible enrollees of their benefits.
- Support the removal of barriers (e.g., deductibles, co-pays, prior authorization, stepped-care therapy, requiring counseling in order to have medications covered) for cessation treatments.
- Report on the number of covered lives with access to comprehensive treatment benefits.
- Support the creation and implementation of business incentives (public recognition, higher consumer rankings/recognition, etc.) for the provision and use of comprehensive cessation benefits.
- Provide incentives for health systems and providers to improve the delivery of effective treatments.

OUR GOAL: Expand access to comprehensive tobacco cessation treatment to 50% of smokers by 2015 and 100% by 2020