

# 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**

### **POLICYMAKERS, REGULATORS AND ELECTED OFFICIALS**

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 Policymakers, Regulators and Elected Officials Can Take**

- Require the reporting by payers (major insurers) of information on the number of covered lives with access to comprehensive smoking cessation benefits through publicly funded health programs.
- Support inclusion of comprehensive coverage in all federally-funded or authorized health programs (e.g., Medicare, Medicaid, FEHBP, ERISA), and within the framework of health reform.
- Examine state and federal insurance regulation definitions of addiction and, where applicable, ensure tobacco-use is included.
- Create incentives for the provision of comprehensive treatment benefits.
- Develop coverage standards and measurements through accrediting bodies (e.g., NCQA, Joint Commission).
- Take advantage of the heightened interest in quitting (and increased success) that accompanies community policy changes, such as smokefree places and increased tobacco taxes, by providing enhanced cessation support prior to, and after, such policy changes.

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