

# ELIMINATE TOBACCO USE

Despite significant declines in tobacco use in Texas over the last several decades, it continues to **claim the lives of 28,000 Texans** every year.

And it **costs the state \$8.85 billion annually** in direct medical costs. Yet, according to the latest statistics, **4.69 million Texas residents continue to smoke** or use other forms of tobacco. This is due, in part, to the fact that tobacco use is a relapsing-remitting condition that most often requires medical intervention to

address. Tobacco use is much more than an undesirable habit or unhealthy behavior. It is a disease that requires dedicated efforts across a range of domains – policy, education and clinical service delivery – to ensure successful prevention and treatment.

## OVERVIEW

To address the toll of tobacco in Texas, the Eliminate Tobacco Use Initiative was created. A collaborative comprised of 14 University of Texas (UT) academic institutions and health science centers was formed to implement this initiative.

The initiative touches **more than 221,000 students, 100,000 staff members and 199,000 individuals** covered under the UT System Select plan as well as **over 450,000 individuals** from partnering institutions.

## ELIMINATE TOBACCO USE SUMMIT

Launched in 2016, the Eliminate Tobacco Use Initiative held its first ever Summit addressing the key areas of policy, prevention education and cessation-- All 14 UT institutions and key tobacco control partners were in attendance.

Goals of the summit:

- Share resources and best practices to strengthen tobacco control efforts
- Explore opportunities to support implementation efforts
- Implement tobacco control actions across UT institutions

## KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### UT System Becomes Tobacco-Free

In May 2017, just 18 months after the start of the Eliminate Tobacco Use Initiative, all 14 UT academic institutions and health science centers became tobacco-free, making it the first public university system and largest single employer in Texas to prohibit tobacco use.

### T21 Passes in San Antonio

In January 2018, San Antonio became the first city in Texas to raise the minimum legal sales age of tobacco products to 21 years old. Faculty and staff served as primary educational resources on the latest tobacco prevention policy.

## IMPACT REPORT

The Eliminate Tobacco Use Initiative has highlighted accomplishments for Year 1 and 2 through creation of two Impact Reports that describe development of work groups, key activities and best practices across the 14 UT institutions.



## THE FUTURE

**The overall goal of the Eliminate Tobacco Use initiative includes expansion beyond the UT System for broader reach across the nation.**

Surrounding state colleges and universities outside of Texas will be invited to future summits to convene discussions around creation of tobacco-free cultures and communities. The MD Anderson Cancer Center EndTobacco® Team will provide technical assistance and guidance to interested colleges

and universities for potential replication of the Summit or similar forum-type setting in which collaborations around policy, prevention and cessation can be formed. A continued prioritization of resources for this effort is likely to have a positive public health impact across institutions and in our respective communities.

**For more information on our efforts and/or to obtain a copy of our Impact Report, please email [Endtobacco@mdanderson.org](mailto:Endtobacco@mdanderson.org).**

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