



**Northwestern
Health Unit**

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For Immediate Release

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An Opportunity for Northwestern Ontario Smokers

Smokers in three Northwestern Ontario communities have the opportunity to enroll in the STOP (Smoking Treatment for Ontario Patients) On-the-Road program and receive nicotine replacement therapy (NRT), free of charge to help them in their attempt to quit smoking. Workshops will be held in late January 2012 in the following communities:

- Kenora – January 24, 2012
- Dryden – January 25, 2012
- Fort Frances – January 26, 2012

Interested smokers should call the Northwestern Health Unit tobacco information line at 1-888-404-4231 to see if they are eligible to participate.

For many smokers the cost of nicotine replacement products is a barrier to quitting. The STOP Study is an evidence-based opportunity to receive five weeks of free nicotine replacement, a practical support to help with nicotine withdrawal symptoms, which can help smokers quit.

The STOP Study is conducted by the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) and is funded by the Government of Ontario. For further support to quit a tobacco addiction contact the Smokers Helpline at 1-877-513-5333 or online at www.smokershelpline.ca

Background: The STOP Study

Introduced in January 2006 through a partnership of the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) and the Ontario Ministry of Health Promotion, the STOP Study has already provided free nicotine replacement therapy such as nicotine gum or patches to an unprecedented 62,000 people.

Three follow-up telephone calls, spaced over twelve months, help researchers learn more about the long-term impact of using nicotine replacement on quitting smoking and remaining smoke-free. To date, study results have shown an improvement of between two and four times the typical quitting rates.

At least 25 per cent of participants in past STOP On-the-Road workshops have successfully quit smoking and stayed off tobacco for six months as a direct result of the nicotine replacement therapy supplied by CAMH. This compares with normal quit rates of 7 percent for Ontarians under the age of 45, and 3 percent for those over 45 years of age.

While smoking rates in Ontario have declined over the past twenty years, 1.6 million Ontarians continue to smoke and 16,000 die each year from the effects of commercial tobacco products.

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