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Economy Spurs Increased Quitline Services *Iowans can get twice as much nicotine gum, patches in January*

Faced with the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression, Iowans who smoke have another reason to quit—it's expensive. With the typical pack-a-day Iowa smoker now spending nearly \$1,900 per year on cigarettes, Quitline Iowa (1-800-QUIT-NOW) is doubling the amount of nicotine patches and gum available to callers during the month of January.

“Smoking—Iowa’s number one preventable cause of death—costs Iowans \$1 billion dollars annually in health care costs,” said Iowa Department of Public Health Director Tom Newton. “By offering four weeks of nicotine replacement products throughout January, we’re providing this valuable resource to improve the health and bottom line for thousands of Iowans and our state as a whole.”

In Iowa, cigarettes cost \$5.18 per pack on average, or about \$36 per week for a pack-a-day smoker. Iowans can call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) to receive a free four-week supply of nicotine patches, gum or lozenges. Quitline Iowa also has specially trained quit coaches who help make individualized quit plans and offer ongoing support through follow-up calls. After January 31, Quitline will resume offering callers the two-week supply available throughout the year.

Iowans who quit smoking will see improvements in blood circulation and lung function in as little as two weeks. Coughing and shortness of breath will begin to decrease after the first month. By this time, most smokers will have saved enough to buy a Blu-ray disc player or 60 gallons of gas.

Using nicotine patches and gum in conjunction with telephone counseling makes it twice as likely that a smoker will be able to quit successfully. For smokers who need help beyond the four weeks of medication through Quitline Iowa, most pharmacies sell a two-week supply for about \$25—considerably less than the cost of just one week’s supply of cigarettes to a pack-a-day smoker.

For more information, call 1-800-784-8669 (1-800-QUIT-NOW). To calculate how much tobacco costs you based on your brand and the amount you smoke, visit www.quitlineiowa.org.