Dear Health Systems Regional Contractors,

The Center of Excellence for Health Systems Improvement (COE for HSI) for a Tobacco-Free New York is excited to send our inaugural weekly news update, which will provide Regional Contractors with emerging research and news updates from the field. In this edition, you will find articles on:

- Training-of-trainers methodology
- Using varenicline for gradual reduction of tobacco use
- Raising the minimum legal age to purchase tobacco products

 Archived news updates will be housed on the COE for HSI website. Please email Francesca Sherman if you have any questions or no longer would like to receive these e-mail updates.

Best,
The COE for HSI Team

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**Public Health Implications of Raising the Minimum Age of Legal Access to Tobacco Products**

*Date: March 2015*  
*Publication: Institute of Medicine*

New York State Department of Health Bureau of Tobacco Control Director Harlan Juster recently circulated this article. Although it does not related to Health Systems Improvement for a Tobacco-free New York Regional Contractors work plans, this article does examine a topic that has been a focus of recent national attention related to addressing tobacco dependence: raising the minimum legal age (MLA) for purchasing tobacco products. Specifically, a panel of experts was convened by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to review existing literature and use mathematical modeling to explore the public health implications of raising the MLA to above 18 years of age. In this article, the authors predict that raising the MLA would have a substantial positive effect on public health through reducing the number of young adults who begin using tobacco and reducing tobacco-related morbidity and mortality.

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**Teachback methodology: building global training capacity with a unique training-of-trainers course**

*Date: March 2015*  
*Publication: Public Health Action*

This article describes using the CDC Teachback Methodology Training Curriculum in training-of-trainers courses. In this study, participants practiced teaching a course while trainers observed and provided feedback to ensure accuracy of course content and training skills. The trainers in this example used this model to build the capacity of the tuberculosis and HIV workforces; however, the model also can be employed with workforces addressing other health conditions, including tobacco use. Regional contractors can use this resource in the development and practical application of training-of-trainer modules at health systems to implement evidence-based tobacco dependence treatment strategies.

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**Effects of varenicline on smoking cessation throughout smoking reduction: a randomized clinical trial**

*Date: February 2015*  
*Publication: Journal of the American Medical Association*

This article details a randomized clinical trial that was conducted to test the efficacy and safety of varenicline for tobacco dependence treatment. The authors found that, among tobacco users not willing or able to quit within the next month, but willing to reduce tobacco use and make a quit attempt at three months, use of varenicline for 24 weeks compared with placebo significantly increased smoking cessation rates at the end of treatment, as well as one year later. The authors conclude that developing effective interventions to achieve tobacco abstinence through gradual reduction could engage more tobacco users in quitting, a trend with implications for health care delivery systems.