

## **Best Practice Example – Comprehensive Tobacco Dependence Treatment Policy** Center for a Tobacco Free Hudson Valley FQHC Partnership

### **Background**

Ezras Choilim Health Center (EHC) is a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) located in the center of a Hasidic community in Monroe, New York, in Orange County- one of the seven counties served by the Center for a Tobacco Free Hudson Valley (CFTFHV).

Sue Lennon, a Health Systems Improvement expert from CFTFHV, began working with EHC in 2011. She began by garnering administrative commitment from the EHC CEO and Medical Director. These administrators were highly motivated to pursue standardization of the delivery of tobacco dependence treatment (TDT) into clinical workflow and establish a tobacco-free campus policy that included addressing, staff smoking.

### **Development of the TDT Policy**

To accomplish this, the CEO assigned a liaison to work with CFTFHV to draft and implement the policy. Although this project had strong-support from EHC Executive Staff, and an EHC liaison who was deeply committed to improving TDT practices, policies still took time to create and implement due to competing priorities. Working in partnership, EHC and CFTFHV finalized the policies and obtained approval from Executive Leadership. EHC adopted both policies in February 2017 and allowed a six-month period before full implementation took place on October 1, 2017.

### **Implementation of the TDT Policy**

To facilitate implementation of the policy and related clinical workflow, EHC leadership convened a *Wellness Team* in 2017 led by an LMSW “Intervention Specialist” from their Behavioral Health department. The Intervention Specialist began facilitating an in-house tobacco-cessation program that EHC patients identified as tobacco-users were referred to. In preparation to lead the tobacco-cessation program at EHC, the Intervention Specialist attended the American Lung Association’s “Freedom From Smoking” (FFS) facilitator training.

In addition to being connected to on-site resources, EHC also refers patients identified as tobacco-users to the NYS Smokers’ Quitline for additional support. CFTFHV worked with the Quitline to streamline the process of Yiddish translation services necessary to serve this patient population.

### **Opportunity to Disseminate Lessons Learned and Best Practices**

Recently, the EHC liaison was promoted to DSRIP Liaison to one of the PPS’ in the Hudson Valley. This became a great opportunity to share lessons learned at EHC amongst all three DSRIP PPS’ in the Hudson Valley.



Sue Lennon from CFTFHV was asked to co-present to a meeting of the medical directors and partners of the three Hudson Valley DSRIP PPS' to showcase the EHC written policies and describe the process that lead to their successful creation. As a result, Refuah Community Health Collaborative (RCHC) PPS in Hudson Valley offered financial incentives to all of their partner organizations to sign a participation agreement with CFTFHV that meets three benchmarks of compliance created by Sue Lennon, Didi Raxworthy, and Leilani Lockett of CFTFHV. These benchmarks include:

- writing and implementing of a TDT policy that is aligned with the *PHS Clinical Practice Guidelines* for TDT
- producing a training plan for clinicians and staff
- submitting data and tracking reports to the RCHC PPS

Connecting DSRIP funding to achieving TDT goals has immediately created interest amongst facilities in the Hudson Valley. CFTFHV is now being contacted by many organizations who wish to implement TDT into their clinical workflow.

