

**November 19<sup>th</sup> is the Great American Smokeout.** The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is asking the provider community to keep their patients with Medicare healthy by encouraging them to take advantage of Medicare-covered smoking and tobacco-use cessation counseling benefits.

Tobacco use contributed to more than 438,000 premature deaths in the United States annually between 1997 and 2001<sup>1</sup>. Additionally, tobacco continues to be the leading cause of preventable disease and death in the United States. Smoking can attribute to and exacerbate heart disease, stroke, lung disease, cancer, diabetes, hypertension, osteoporosis, macular degeneration, abdominal aortic aneurysm, and cataracts.

Medicare provides coverage of smoking and tobacco-use cessation counseling for beneficiaries who use tobacco and have a disease or adverse health effect linked to tobacco use, or who take certain therapeutic agents whose metabolism or dosage is affected by tobacco use.

## What Can You Do?

As a health care professional who provides care to patients with Medicare, you can help protect the health of your patients by educating them about their risk factors and encourage them to take advantage of Medicare-covered smoking and tobacco-use cessation counseling benefits.

## For More Information

CMS has developed several educational products related to Medicare-covered smoking and tobacco-use cessation counseling:

- The Guide to Medicare Preventive Services for Physicians, Providers, Suppliers, and Other Health Care Professionals ~ provides coverage and coding information on the array of preventive services and screenings that Medicare covers, including smoking and tobacco-use cessation counseling. [http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNProducts/downloads/mps\\_guide\\_web-061305.pdf](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNProducts/downloads/mps_guide_web-061305.pdf)
- The MLN Preventive Services Educational Products Web Page ~ provides descriptions and ordering information for Medicare Learning Network (MLN) preventive services educational products, including products related to Medicare-covered smoking and tobacco-use cessation counseling. [http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNProducts/35\\_PreventiveServices.asp](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNProducts/35_PreventiveServices.asp)
- Quick Reference Information: Medicare Preventive Services ~ this double-sided chart provides coverage and coding information on Medicare-covered preventive services, including smoking and tobacco-use cessation counseling. [http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNProducts/downloads/MPS\\_QuickReferenceChart\\_1.pdf](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNProducts/downloads/MPS_QuickReferenceChart_1.pdf)
- Smoking and Tobacco-Use Cessation Counseling brochure~ this brochure provides information on coverage for Medicare-covered smoking and tobacco-use cessation counseling.
- <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNProducts/downloads/smoking.pdf>

Please visit the [Medicare Learning Network](#) for more information on these and other Medicare fee-for-service educational products. For more information about The Great American Smokeout, please visit the American Cancer Society's website at: <http://acsf2f.com/gaso/index.html>.

Thank you for helping CMS improve the health of patients with Medicare by joining in the effort to educate eligible beneficiaries about the importance of taking advantage of smoking and tobacco-use cessation counseling services and other preventive services covered by Medicare.

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<sup>1</sup> The American Cancer Society. 2009. *Great American Smokeout: Tobacco-Related Cancer Statistics 2007* [online]. [cited 5 November 2009]. Available from the World Wide Web: (<http://acsf2f.com/gaso/statistics.html>)