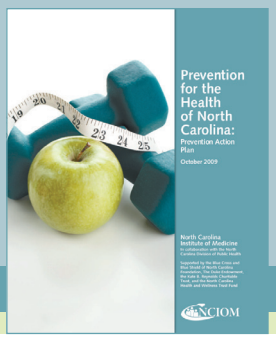

Prevention Action Steps for Hospitals

Prevention for the Health of North Carolina

http://www.nciom.org

Hospitals play an important role in supporting the health of North Carolinians. Since hospitals are both employers and providers of health care, they have a unique opportunity to influence health statewide by promoting prevention among employees, patients, and visitors. In addition, having healthier employees means having a more productive workforce. By following the Prevention Action Steps below, you can help employees, patients, and visitors lead healthier lives.

Be a prevention leader in your community.

- ✓ Become involved in your local Healthy Carolinians chapter.
- ✓ Work with other leaders in the community, such as faith-based or lay health workers, to ensure the prevention message reaches everyone.
- ✓ Work with local public health leaders and employee groups to improve population health.

Be tobacco-free.

- ✓ Enforce 100% tobacco-free campus policies to eliminate secondhand smoke and encourage tobacco users to quit.
- ✓ Offer insurance coverage that includes counseling and cessation medications to employees who use tobacco.
- ✓ Promote the NC Quitline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) and encourage tobacco users to call for help in quitting.

Create a healthy food environment.

- ✓ Promote healthy food options in cafeterias, break rooms, and vending machines at all times.
- ✓ Ensure healthy foods are visible and accessible to everyone.
- ✓ Post nutrition information at point-of-selection and use icons to identify healthy items.
- ✓ Modify and/or establish vendor contracts to bring in healthy foods and beverages.
- ✓ Regularly host a farmers' market or provide a farm stand.

Promote physical activity.

- ✓ Implement physical activity policies and practices that promote physical activity among your employees such as:

  - Posting signs by elevators and at stairwells to encourage employees to use the stairs.

  - Providing on-site exercise facilities or benefits to encourage physical activity, such as discounts to a local gym.

Promote hand hygiene.

- ✓ Encourage frequent hand washing and make hand sanitizer easily accessible.

Encourage providers to be prevention-oriented.

- ✓ Promote use of the current US Preventive Services Task Force's recommendations for screening, counseling, and treatment, including those for tobacco cessation, nutrition, obesity, alcohol and substance abuse, depression, and sexually transmitted diseases including HIV.

Encourage recommended vaccines.

- ✓ Encourage providers to discuss recommended vaccines with patients.
- ✓ Ensure health care workers receive recommended vaccines.
- ✓ Encourage and educate community members to receive recommended vaccines.

Encourage physicians to address substance abuse in the emergency department setting.

- ✓ Use the evidence-based Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral into Treatment (SBIRT) method to help patients with substance abuse problems.

Help patients learn their HIV status.

- ✓ Institute opt-out HIV testing.

STATE RESOURCES

General Prevention

- NC Prevention Partners, NC Good Health Directory. http://www.ncpreventionpartners.org/dnn/WhatWeDo/Resources/NCGoodHealthDirectory/SearchResources/tabid/168/Default.aspx

Nutrition and Physical Activity

- Eat Smart, Move More Plan to Prevent Overweight, Obesity, and Related Chronic Diseases. http://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com
- NC Prevention Partners, Healthy Hospital Initiative. http://www.ncpreventionpartners.org/dnn/WhatWeDo/Programs/FocusonHospitals/tabid/73/Default.aspx

Tobacco

- NC Prevention Partners, Healthy Hospital Initiative. http://www.ncpreventionpartners.org/dnn/WhatWeDo/Programs/FocusonHospitals/tabid/73/Default.aspx
- NC Quitline. 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669). http://www.quitlinenc.org

Healthy Carolinians

- http://www.healthycarolinians.org/

NATIONAL RESOURCES

Clinical Guidelines

- US Preventive Services Task Force. http://www.ahrq.gov/CLINIC/uspstfix.htm

Community Prevention Strategies

- CDC Guide to Community Preventive Services. http://www.thecommunityguide.org/index.html

Mental Health and Substance Abuse

- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral into Treatment). http://sbirt.samhsa.gov/about.htm

Prevention and Business

- National Business Group on Health. http://www.businessgrouphealth.org/publications/index.cfm and *The Business Case for Prevention: Why Investing in Prevention is Good for Business*. http://www.businessgrouphealth.org/preventive/businesscase/index.cfm
- Partnership for Prevention Workplace Guide. http://www.prevent.org/Worksite-Health/Investing-in-Health-Workplace-Guide.aspx

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The above Action Steps were excerpted from recommendations in *Prevention for the Health of North Carolina: Prevention Action Plan*, a collaborative project of the North Carolina Institute of Medicine and the North Carolina Division of Public Health, and have been modified for specific audiences. **The full report is available at http://www.nciom.org.** Generous support for this project was provided by the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation, The Duke Endowment, the North Carolina Health and Wellness Trust Fund, and the Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust. Any opinion, finding, conclusion, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the view and policies of the North Carolina Health and Wellness Trust Fund Commission, the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation, The Duke Endowment, or the Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust.

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