

**UPS**  
*Coordinating Internally and Externally*

Tobacco-related illness is the leading preventable cause of death in the United States, accounting for approximately 20 percent of all deaths annually. In addition, smoking-related medical expenses cost employers an extra \$2,132 per smoking employee per year.<sup>1</sup> In response to growing evidence that tobacco cessation programs improve employee health and yield cost savings to employers, many companies have begun implementing workplace smoking cessation programs.

The National Business Coalition on Health (NBCH) has developed a series of case studies profiling employers that have successfully implemented such programs in an effort to share best practices and lessons learned.

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### **Background**

Headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia, UPS is the world's largest package delivery company and a leading global provider of specialized transportation and logistics services. UPS employs over 400,000 employees and provides service to more than 200 countries and territories. UPS spends over 2 billion dollars per year on health care benefits covering over 700,000 lives.

### **Promoting Wellness**

*"It is our responsibility to provide resources to our employees that help them in one of the toughest battles they will face - to quit tobacco use."* **Judy Pirnie Smith, Health and Productivity Manager**

UPS believes its people are its most valuable asset and has made a commitment to offer total compensation packages to ensure employees' well-being and satisfaction. As part of its commitment, UPS has a health risk appraisal (HRA) program in place that encourages employee participation by contributing to the employee's flexible spending account.

### **Implementing a Tobacco Cessation Program**

In 2006, UPS' Health Care Group partnered with the occupational health manager who oversees corporate campus health and wellness initiatives, to include tobacco cessation as part of its overall wellness program. The impetus to address tobacco cessation arose from increasing attention to smoking-related

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<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Annual smoking-attributable mortality, years of potential life lost, and economic costs – United States, 1995-1999. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* 2002; 51(14): 300-03. Adjusted to 2008 dollars.

## Employer Programs to Support Employees with Tobacco Cessation

data from the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, including the fact that, tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of death in the United States. On average, adults who smoke cigarettes die 14 years earlier than nonsmokers.<sup>2</sup>

UPS already provided access to smoking cessation coaching support through its existing HRA lifestyle program. However, in 2007, the company sought to implement a more comprehensive tobacco cessation program to mitigate the impact of smoking on its overall culture and bottom line.

The program was initially implemented in January 2007 in the corporate office and integrated with other health promotion activities and programs. The corporate office already had a tobacco-free workplace policy with a designated smoking room; when the program launched, the building was declared a tobacco-free workplace with designated smoking areas outside the building.

In February 2007, following the corporate program introduction, UPS enlisted Free & Clear® to roll out an integrated phone- and Web-based tobacco cessation program to all employees, retirees under age 65, and adult dependents with UPS sponsored health plans. Free & Clear is a highly specialized tobacco treatment provider that uses a clinically proven comprehensive approach to tobacco cessation that treats physical addiction, psychological dependence, and behavioral pattern.

This program provides the following resources:

- Toll-free, in-depth telephone counseling support services with a professional quit coach (up to five outbound calls) scheduled at the participant's convenience to discuss topics including:
  - Triggers that lead to smoking or to use any tobacco product
  - History of past quit attempts
  - Level of interest in quitting
  - Myths or misconceptions about quitting
  - Appropriate use of tobacco cessation medications
  - Need for support of friends, family and co-workers
- Unlimited toll free telephone access to Quit Coaches® at Free & Clear for the duration of the treatment program
- Recommendations on the type, dose, and duration of medication, if appropriate
- Access to eight weeks of nicotine patch or gum direct mail order per enrollment with no cost to participant if part of the participant's quit plan (coverage for prescription tobacco deterrents varies by health plan)

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<sup>2</sup> [http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/Factsheets/tobacco\\_related\\_mortality.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/Factsheets/tobacco_related_mortality.htm)

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- Access to print and online resources to help participants quit tobacco through active self-management, including:
  - Evidence- and stage-based quit guides written with a health literacy expert and tested with actual smokers for usability and comprehension
  - Demographic-specific materials, e.g., for smokeless tobacco users, pregnant tobacco users, and Spanish-speaking participants
  - Web Coach™ e-learning tools, social support, and information about quitting
- Follow-up to assess satisfaction and outcomes

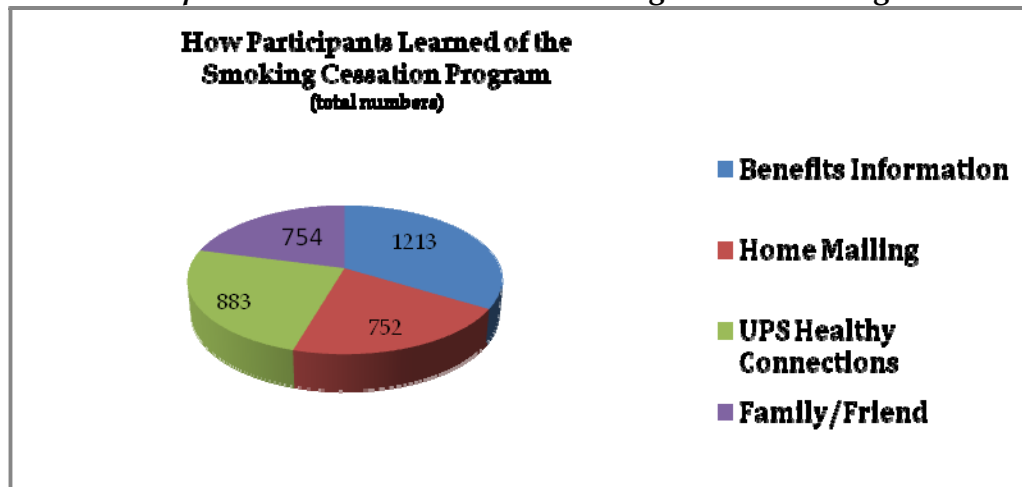
UPS instituted an extensive communications effort to raise awareness of the program. These tactics included:

- Enlisting the support of an executive champion
- Sending a letter to employees from the senior vice president of human resources to introduce the program
- Sharing program information via home mailings, the UPS Web site and employee intranet, cafeteria table tents, and TV screen announcements
- Engineering processes to maximize outreach to program candidates
- Holding lunchtime sessions featuring speakers such as football star Joe Montana to provide background and rationale of program to employees
- Providing free baseline spirometry testing to raise awareness of the impact on lung function

## Outcomes

UPS set a target enrollment of 5,665 participants, and achieved an initial enrollment of 4,399, or approximately 77 percent of its target. In the program's first two years there were 6,355 participants.

### *How Participants Learned About the Smoking Cessation Program*



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Of those participants who enrolled prior to July 2008 and who completed the six month survey (approximately 50% of the participants including employees, eligible dependents, and retirees), 42 percent had quit by December 2008.

### **Lessons Learned**

UPS cites the importance of the following in achieving success:

- Integrating the program with other programs – health coaches, employee assistance program, pharmacy benefit management – to promote access and use
- Allotting adequate time for planning and inclusion of vendors like health plans, employee assistance programs (EAPs), and wellness and health promotion activities
- Setting realistic expectations and goals
- Implementing extensive communications and resources through a variety of media, including online
- Using facts and information from a credible source, such as the CDC, to design and promote the program
- Selecting a vendor with specialty services for tobacco cessation
- Using an evidence-based design that includes counseling and no-cost access to medication

UPS continues to promote its program internally and is planning to implement a tobacco-free campus within the next two years. Additionally, under the current program, UPS is working to standardize coverage of prescription medications and potentially expand the number of covered quit attempts.

### **CDC Guidelines**

This case study illustrates one example along the broad spectrum of steps employers have taken to improve the health and quality of life of their employees while protecting their company's own financial health. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention recommends the following actions for a comprehensive smoking cessation benefit:

- Cover at least four counseling sessions of at least 30 minutes each, including telephone and individual counseling sessions
- Cover all FDA-approved nicotine replacement products and tobacco cessation medications<sup>3</sup>
- Provide counseling and medication coverage for at least two smoking cessation attempts per year
- Eliminate or minimize co-pays or deductibles for counseling and medications<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Best Practices for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs. Available at: [http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/tobacco\\_control\\_programs/stateandcommunity/best\\_practices/00\\_pdfs/2007/best\\_practices\\_2007.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/tobacco_control_programs/stateandcommunity/best_practices/00_pdfs/2007/best_practices_2007.pdf). Accessed January 11, 2008.

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/quit\\_smoking/cessation/00\\_pdfs/ReimbursementBrochureFull.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/quit_smoking/cessation/00_pdfs/ReimbursementBrochureFull.pdf)

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*This case study was developed by NBCH as part of an educational initiative supported by Pfizer Inc. More about this project is available at [www.nbch.org](http://www.nbch.org).*