

Communications Office

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Quit Smoking Services at Health Unit Changing in New Year

Individual Counselling Services Project Entitled "Choose to be...Smoke Free" to End March 31

Friday, December 17, 2010, Peterborough

A three-year project funded by Health Canada at the Peterborough County-City Health Unit to deliver individual smoking cessation services is ending March 31, 2011, however other community resources continue to be available for those who want to quit smoking.

"Choose to be...Smoke Free was a very successful program that helped hundreds of people in our community attempt to quit smoking," said Dr. Rosana Pellizzari, Medical Officer of Health. "We learned through this project that there are many local residents who want to quit and that supporting them with free, individualized counselling can be very effective because of its holistic and non-judgmental approach."

The Public Health Nurse hired through *Choose to be...Smoke Free* will continue to support current clients until the end of March and will no longer be accepting new clients as of January 1. The final Quit Smoking Group is scheduled to begin January 10 for six consecutive Monday evenings at the Peterborough Public Library. While the Health Unit seeks out new funding to build its capacity to deliver individual cessation counselling services, local residents who wish to quit smoking can call staff at (705) 743-1000 for advice on where to access other local resources to help them in their attempt.

Funded under the Federal Tobacco Control Strategy, *Choose to be...Smoke Free* assisted 307 people in their efforts to quit smoking and ran six quit smoking groups, all at no cost, since 2008. Through the program participants received help developing a personalized quit plan, ongoing support and encouragement, and new skills for living without tobacco. In some cases, nicotine replacement therapy was also provided to clients at no charge. Originally funded as a two-year project, in March 2009 the Health Unit received additional financial support to continue the program for another year and expand its services to include clients from the Haliburton Kawartha Pine Ridge District Health Unit.

The Health Unit wishes to thank the many partners who contributed to the success of this project, including the Canadian Mental Health Association, Peterborough Family Resource Centre, Curve Lake First Nation, Hiawatha First Nation, Peterborough Regional Health Centre and Primary Care Services of Peterborough.

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