

# Project SWITCH



May 2025 Newsletter

## Welcome Back to the Project SWITCH Newsletter!

*Project SWITCH (Supporting Workplace Investment in Tobacco Control and Health) seeks to promote wellness among Texans by partnering with lung cancer screening programs to build capacity for system-wide, sustainable initiatives that will reduce tobacco use and secondhand smoke exposure among employees, patients, and visitors.*

## Partner Updates

### UT Tyler's East Texas Lung Nodule Program: Strengthening Tobacco Use Cessation and Policy Enforcement


Program Champion Misty Lewis has been hard at work advancing tobacco use cessation efforts at [UT Health East Texas](#). Through collaboration, on-the-ground action, and a commitment to continuous improvement, Misty is helping ensure patients and staff alike have the support they need to live tobacco-free.

To raise awareness of the tobacco use cessation services at UT Health East Texas, our Health Education Specialist, Mikal Zere, collaborated with Misty to develop a pull-up banner (pictured to the right) highlighting resources and support offered at their Tobacco Cessation Clinic.

To support and reinforce their tobacco-free policy, we provided Misty with liquid nails to help install tobacco-free signage throughout the campus—particularly in areas where tobacco use was observed during our site visit and where enforcement had previously been challenging.

Misty is also hard at work compiling monthly reports on tobacco use services, which play a crucial role in evaluating the effectiveness of services and driving continuous quality improvements. We couldn't be prouder of Misty's dedication to helping patients achieve their goal of quitting tobacco use.

### UT Health East Texas Lung Nodule Program



The UT Health East Texas Lung Nodule Program is comprised of specialists in pulmonary medicine, radiology, thoracic surgery, oncology, radiation oncology and nurse navigators. Together they provide a comprehensive approach to follow-up management of lung nodules.


The program is managed by these core principles:

- **Early Detection** – Detect lung cancer early by using low-dose chest computerized tomography (CT) lung screening in high-risk active or former smokers.
- **Evaluation** – Provide timely assessment of lung nodules and cancer staging using advance technology.
- **Treatment** – Improve survival rates by timely follow-up and coordination of care.


Lung nodules are common and often go undetected because they do not usually cause any noticeable symptoms. They are often found on a chest X-ray or CT scan when performed for another condition. If you have been diagnosed with a lung nodule, your doctor can refer you to the Lung Nodule Program.

A lung nodule is more likely to be cancerous if you have a history of tobacco use, especially smoking. Lung cancer can start as a single nodule. If you are wanting to stop smoking ask about the Tobacco Cessation Program, which offers treatment to help patients quit. Quitting smoking and tobacco products is crucial to improve overall lung health. Ask about our programs at your next visit!

If you have been diagnosed with a lung nodule, your doctor can refer you to the Lung Nodule Program.



For more information, scan the QR code or call 903-877-7369.



## Hendrick Health's Lung Nodule Program : Making Strides Toward Program Completion

The team at Hendrick Health's Lung Nodule Program is making meaningful progress in their tobacco use cessation efforts. Staff recently completed a pre-recorded tobacco dependence training, gaining valuable insights into the harms of tobacco use and effective brief interventions to support quit attempts. Program Champion Monica Weddle is actively enhancing services by making patient health education materials available at the center and leading implementation efforts. Select staff members also participated in an in-depth interview with our qualitative analyst, offering thoughtful reflections on the tobacco-free workplace policy and its impact on their workplace. In a major step forward, Monica has finalized the nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) procedures and received the center's first NRT shipment to support both patients and employees in their quit journeys.

Thank you, Monica, for your dedication to making tobacco use cessation services more accessible to both patients and employees at Hendrick Health.



## Celebrating New Tobacco Treatment Specialists!

Sandra Gallegos (UT Health East Texas), along with Justin Langreck and Kenneth Schuessler (Hendrick Health), recently completed The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center's Tobacco Treatment Training Program held January 13-17, 2025. Following an intensive week-long training, all three successfully passed their exam to become Tobacco Treatment Specialists! Please help us congratulate these professionals on this important milestone and their dedication to supporting tobacco use cessation and lung health!



## New Publication: Lung Cancer Screening Opportunities in Behavioral Health Settings

We are excited to share a new publication that sheds light on an important and often overlooked opportunity: integrating lung cancer screening into behavioral healthcare settings. This insightful commentary, co-authored by Project SWITCH faculty Drs. Lorraine Reitzel (Program Director) and Lisa Lowenstein (Co-Investigator), has been published in CHEST, the journal from The American College of Chest Physicians. The authors explore how behavioral health professionals – who often work closely with individuals at elevated risk for lung cancer – are uniquely positioned to help bridge gaps in screening access. With early detection being critical to survival, this approach holds promise for reducing lung cancer mortality, particularly among people living with mental health or substance use disorders. Click [here](#) to access the commentary!



# Registration Now Open for MD Anderson's Tobacco Treatment Training Program!

Become a credentialed Tobacco Treatment Specialist through The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center's Tobacco Treatment Training Program (TTTP). The program is a five-day virtual course focused on the skills needed to effectively deliver tobacco use cessation treatment in both a clinic and community setting. Participants are eligible to receive **up to 32.25 Continuing Education hours**.

Their next session will be held from June 9-13, 2025. Registration is open now until May 9 and can be accessed [here](#).

If you have any questions related to the program, please visit the TTTP [website](#) or email [ctts@mdanderson.org](mailto:ctts@mdanderson.org). Please see the flyer to the right for more details.

## Become a Tobacco Treatment Specialist

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### Tobacco Treatment Training Program

June 9-13, 2025

Virtual training facilitated by  
The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center

For registration and more information:  
[www.mdanderson.org/tobaccotraining](http://www.mdanderson.org/tobaccotraining)

Questions: [ctts@mdanderson.org](mailto:ctts@mdanderson.org)

MD Anderson will offer continuing education hours from the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), National Commission for Health Education Credentialing (NCHEC). CEs for LPCs also available.  
For further information on MD Anderson's End Tobacco Program:  
[www.mdanderson.org/EndTobacco](http://www.mdanderson.org/EndTobacco)

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS  
**MD Anderson**  
Cancer Center  
Making Cancer History®

One-day Prescriber Track available

Thursday, Jun. 12th

Attendees will only get the below core competencies:

- Treatment Planning
- Pharmacotherapy
- Relapse Prevention

This will NOT be credentialed like those that stay for the week long training.

## New Asynchronous Course with Free Credits: Tobacco Dependence - Education and Training

In collaboration with The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center's Continuing Professional Education office, our team has developed Tobacco Dependence: Education and Training—a 60-minute, asynchronous course designed to empower healthcare professionals with the tools to deliver effective, evidence-based tobacco use cessation interventions, including referrals to state quitlines. Open to all specialties and professions, the training addresses the chronic and relapsing nature of tobacco use, explores related health disparities, and introduces practical models like Ask-Advise-Refer. Participants can earn 1.00 hour of CME, AAPA, CNE, or MOC credit.



# Check Out the EX Program by the Truth Initiative!

EX Program is a text message program developed by Truth Initiative with the Mayo Clinic Nicotine Dependence Center. Designed to help people aged 13 and older quit nicotine and tobacco use, EX Program is tailored to provide a personalized experience based on age, enrollment date or quit date, and tobacco product type.

**Individuals in Texas** can enroll by texting  
**VAPEFREETX to 88709.**

Those **outside of Texas** can text **EXPROGRAM**  
to **88709** to enroll.

- People using EX Program can also receive mental health support including mindfulness training and self-care prompts, breathing training, and access to a text-based mental health support and a crisis intervention program called Crisis Text Line.
- A study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association showed that their youth and young adult-focused text message program, formerly known as This is Quitting and now part of EX Program, can increase odds of quitting by up to 40%.
- Download the latest free print materials from the online store: [proforma.com/exprogram](https://proforma.com/exprogram).

For more information, explore the EX Program website [here](#) and watch the campaign video below!



Click the image to watch the campaign video!



### Why Choose EX Program

<b>24/7 support</b> Get free, confidential 24/7 access to advice from experts and experienced quitters.	<b>40%</b> Research shows using EX Program can increase your odds of quitting by up to 40%.	<b>2 million+</b> EX Program has helped 2M+ members and counting.	<b>96%</b> 96% of EX Program members find it helpful.
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### How EX Program Helps You Quit

Kicking nicotine is complex and deeply personal. EX Program isn't a one-size-fits-all solution—it's a flexible program that evolves with you. We want you to know: You're not in this alone and you can do hard things. We're here to support you at every turn.

#### Change your patterns

To quit, you need to break a physical addiction. EX Program's daily texts and resources help you identify triggers, cope with cravings, and replace old routines with new, healthier ones.

#### Find support

Support is proven to help you quit, whether it's from a friend, a family member, or a community. The EX Community is free, anonymous, 24/7 support—a safe space to engage (or just lurk!) and learn.

#### Explore nicotine replacement therapy

Quit medication like nicotine gum, lozenges, or patches can double your chances of quitting, and make you more comfortable along the way. Learn about your options and access the information you need to make the best choice for you.

# Join MD Anderson's Tele-Mentoring Program, Project TEACH!

Project TEACH (Tobacco Education And Cessation in the Health System) is an ECHO (Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes)-based tele-mentoring program facilitated by The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. The aim of this program is to provide tobacco education, consultation, and treatment strategies to clinical providers and health professionals.

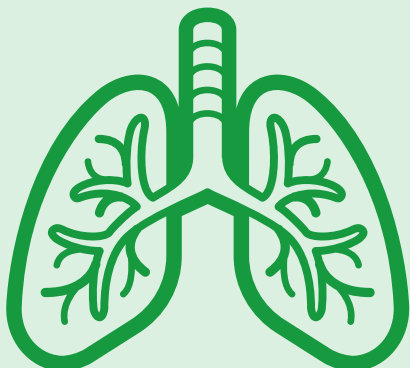
Sessions are held virtually twice per month on Tuesdays from 12pm-1pm CT. The meeting link is sent via email the week of each session.

To join the sessions, please email [Echo-Tobacco@MDAnderson.org](mailto:Echo-Tobacco@MDAnderson.org) for registration details. Free Continuing Education and Tobacco Treatment Specialist credits are offered. Visit the Project TEACH website for more information.



## Want to Stay Informed About Free Training Opportunities? We Have You Covered!

Our team compiles and shares information twice a month about tobacco-related trainings being offered virtually from across the nation that often offer free Continuing or Medical Education credits. If you or someone you know would like to be added to our distribution list, please do not hesitate to reach out to us at [TakingTexasTobaccoFree@gmail.com](mailto:TakingTexasTobaccoFree@gmail.com) or [click here](#) for a pre-populated email template.



TRAINING

TEACH

TOBACCO FREE

Upcoming Virtual Educational Opportunities

List Compiled by Taking Texas Tobacco Free

MAY 6

First Line Smoking Cessation Medications: Recognizing and Managing Side Effects

- 12:00-1:00 PM CDT
- 1.00 CME/CEU available
- MD Anderson's Project TEACH (ECHO Clinic) aims to provide tobacco education, consulting, and cessation strategies to clinical providers
- Sign up by emailing [echo@mdanderson.org](mailto:echo@mdanderson.org)

MAY 9

Comparison of Two Papers: Effects of Tobacco-21 on Maternal Smoking

- 1:00-2:15 PM CDT
- No CME/CEUs available
- The goal of the Tobacco Online Policy Seminar series is to disseminate research focused on developing effective tobacco policies for the improvement of population health
- Register [here!](#)

MAY 14

Protecting Pets from Secondhand and Thirdhand Smoke: Understanding the Risks

- 11:00 AM-12:00 PM CDT
- 1.00 CHES/CME available
- The MainHealth Center for Tobacco Independence seeks to address tobacco use and exposure through education, prevention, policy, treatment, and training initiatives
- Register [here!](#)

Self-Paced

The Power of Incentives: Leveraging a Contingency Management Approach to Address Tobacco Use for Individuals with Mental Health and Substance Use Challenges

- No CME/CEUs available
- The National Center of Excellence for Tobacco-Free Recovery aims to reduce the high rate of commercial tobacco use among people with mental health or substance use disorders
- Register [here!](#)

Explore the 'Tobacco Cessation Change Package' from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, a comprehensive guide designed to help healthcare professionals implement strategies to enhance tobacco cessation care.

Visit our website [www.TakingTexasTobaccoFree.com](http://www.TakingTexasTobaccoFree.com) for more resources and sign up for our newsletter [here!](#)