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Free & Clear[®] Publishes First Study on an Integrated Phone and Web Tobacco Cessation Program

Article to be published in Journal of Medical Internet Research


SEATTLE, November 17, 2008 – Free & Clear, Inc., the national leader in evidence-based tobacco cessation programs delivered via the phone and internet, has announced the publication of their study on phone and Web-based tobacco use treatment in the *Journal of Medical Internet Research*. This study is the first ever published on tobacco cessation programs that integrate phone and Web for delivery.

Results of the Free & Clear study found that individuals tend to use phone services more than Web services for tobacco cessation. However, for those using the integrated service, Web utilization was significantly associated with increased call completion and improved tobacco abstinence rates at the six-month follow-up evaluation.

“Phone-based tobacco cessation programs have been proven effective and widely adopted, but this is the first published study that explores the real-world use and effectiveness of integrated phone and Web-based programs,” said Tim McAfee, Free & Clear’s Chief Medical Officer. “Our study has implications for reaching and treating tobacco users with an integrated program, and adds further support for health plans and employers to offer comprehensive cessation services for their members and employees.”

The Free & Clear study measured the program utilization, quit status, satisfaction and demographics of 11,143 participants enrolled in Free & Clear’s Quit For Life[®] Program between May, 2006 and October, 2007. All participants were eligible to receive up to five proactive phone counseling sessions with a Quit Coach[®], unlimited access to the interactive website, up to twenty tailored emails, printed Quit Guides, and cessation medications and/or medication health education information.

Dr. Susan Zbikowski, first author of the study and Free & Clear’s Vice President of Clinical and Behavioral Sciences noted, “While most studies have looked at the effectiveness of online tobacco cessation programs as a stand-alone service, this is the first study of online resources as a robust complement to phone programs to



improve program use and quit rates. Our research provides evidence that participants who actively engage in the Web component of an integrated program are more likely to use phone support and to quit.”

Additional findings of the study showed that women were more adherent to the overall program, and utilized web discussion forums and phone services significantly more than men. Additionally, moderate smokers and those over the age of 26 utilized the services more than younger and light or heavy smokers. Satisfaction with the services was high (92 – 95 percent) and varied somewhat with Web utilization. The 30-day quit rate at the six-month follow up among those who responded to the survey was 41 percent.

About Free & Clear, Inc.

Free & Clear, Inc., the healthy behaviors company, specializes in phone-based cognitive behavioral coaching and web-based learning to help employers measurably improve the overall health and productivity of their workforces. Free & Clear’s evidence-based programs address modifiable health risks that contribute to chronic disease: tobacco use, poor nutrition, physical inactivity and stress. More than 50 million people have access to the Free & Clear Quit For Life[®] Program, the nation’s leading tobacco cessation program, which has had its proof of effectiveness published in multiple peer-reviewed, scientific journals over the course of more than 20 years. The Mind & Body[™] Program has been developed by nationally recognized experts and is based on the most up-to-date, clinically proven science available on weight management and obesity prevention. Free & Clear is based in Seattle, Washington. More information about Free & Clear can be found at www.freeclear.com.

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