



## *Quintiles Transnational Corporation Upholding the CEO Cancer Gold Standard*

Tobacco-related illness is the leading cause of preventable 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**

Quintiles Transnational Corporation, headquartered in North Carolina, is a global leader in pharmaceutical services, providing professional expertise, market intelligence and partnering solutions for the pharmaceutical, biotechnology and healthcare industries. The company has 19,000 employees, nearly half of whom work from home, and offices in 50 countries.

### **Promoting Wellness**

*“With many employees working remotely, Quintiles is proud to support a culture of excellence and employee well-being that transcends office walls. We recognize the value of promoting a healthier workforce.” Ann Skye, Wellness Manager*

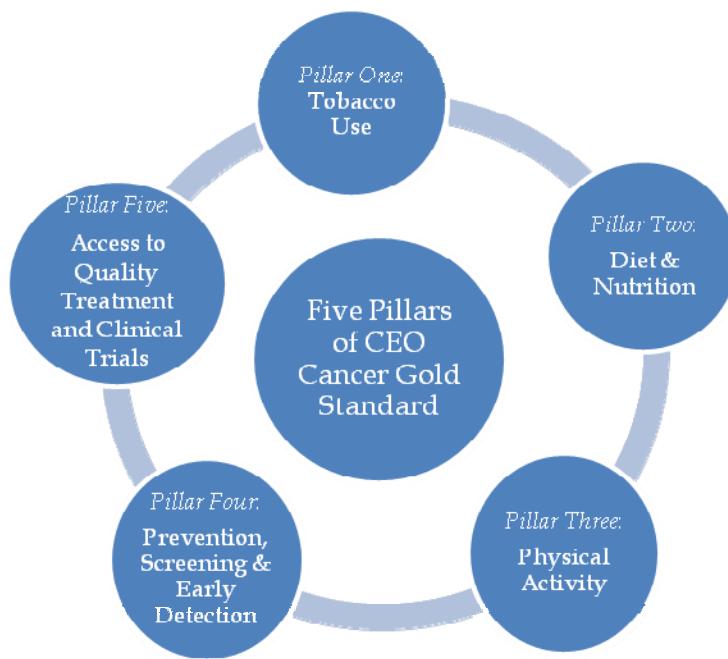
In 2007, Quintiles was recognized in a local survey as one of the “best places to work” in North Carolina’s Research Triangle area, and also was awarded the Gold Start! Fit-Friendly Company Award from the American Heart Association.

In addition, Quintiles received certification as a CEO Cancer Gold Standard company by taking part in a rigorous process in which a company demonstrates to a review board that it encourages healthy lifestyles and provides support for employees diagnosed with cancer. The CEO Cancer Gold Standard is built upon the following pillars, which address risk reduction, screening, early detection and access to quality care:

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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



### Implementing a Smoking Cessation Program

In 2007, Quintiles introduced its tobacco cessation initiative as part of a broad program designed to meet the CEO Cancer Gold Standard. Through its existing employee wellness program, Healthy U Healthy Q, Quintiles used creative and innovative strategies from the CEO Cancer Gold Standard to engage employees, help them adopt healthier lifestyles and support an environment of employee wellness. These strategies include:

1. *Tobacco-free workplace policy*  
Quintiles has a comprehensive tobacco-free policy that includes workplace offices, grounds, parking lots and offsite Quintiles meetings and events. The policy encompasses all office- and home-based employees, dependents and visitors.
2. *Free over-the-counter and prescription smoking cessation medications*  
Employees and dependents covered by the Quintiles health plan are eligible for prescription tobacco cessation medications at no cost. In addition, the American Cancer Society's Quitline provides certain over-the-counter nicotine replacement therapy at no cost to the individual.
3. *Access to additional resources*  
Employees have access to a custom-designed Web portal, health information and personal health management tools, as well as unlimited access to health experts. Through the American Cancer Society's Quitline, employees can receive confidential counseling and educational materials. On-site tobacco

## **Employer Programs to Support Employees with Tobacco Cessation**

classes are provided by request at no charge. Resources are available to all employees, including home-based employees and those who travel frequently.

### *4. Communicating the Program to Employees*

The extensive communications plan commenced with an announcement of the tobacco-free work place policy six months prior to the effective date. The medical information was provided by the Chief Medical and Scientific Officer.

## **Outcomes**

Two weeks after the implementation of the tobacco-free policy, Quintiles conducted a survey to assess the program. Results showed that employees were prepared and knowledgeable about the policy and grateful for the support to quit smoking.

In less than a year after implementation of the program, initial voluntary data showed a decrease in the rate of employee tobacco use from 12 percent to 10 percent. Quintiles' goal is to achieve a less than 5 percent tobacco use rate within 5 years or by 2012. Smoking cessation materials are provided to prospective new hires in Quintiles' offices in the United States. The rate of tobacco use by new hires is estimated at less than 5 percent.

Of those employees who have quit tobacco use since the start of the program, about 50 percent indicate "cold turkey" as their method. Quintiles also has seen early success with employees who have selected a smoking cessation medication as part of their quit efforts. The company plans to leverage this success to continue educating employees about the benefits of quit attempts that include both counseling and medication.

In addition, Quintiles is working to expand its tobacco-free policy globally with policies and support programs appropriate for each location's specific needs.

## **Lessons Learned**

Critical lessons learned include:

- Embedding a tobacco cessation program and policy within a comprehensive employee wellness program
- Securing steadfast support from the CEO (in this case, through the process of achieving the CEO Gold Standard)
- Building a program and policy on medical credibility
- Providing tobacco cessation support for employees in advance of implementing a tobacco-free workplace policy

## Employer Programs to Support Employees with Tobacco Cessation

- Reducing financial barriers for employees (or covered dependents)
- Recognizing that the program design must include relapse support
- Offering a variety of tobacco cessation support tools – *one size does not fit all*

### 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>2</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>3</sup>

*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).*

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<sup>2</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>3</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)