



## How to Use the Tobacco Tax Tool Kit

With the goal of rallying support for funding of the Medicaid Medically Needy and Medicaid Aged/Disabled programs, we have prepared a tool kit to help you explain and promote the proposed tobacco tax in Florida.

The Tobacco Tax Grassroots Tool Kit is a portfolio of letters, articles, and electronic presentations for you to use in designing your own grassroots campaign.

Aimed at “friendly” audiences, both within your hospital and in the community, the tool kit provides templates of letters to legislators, physicians, and patients, as well as a stockpile of important facts regarding the benefits of the tobacco tax. All of the material is formatted in Word or a PDF, which is easy to customize as you reach out to specific audiences. Here’s what you can do:

### **I. Target Easy-to-Mobilize Audiences: Internal and External**

Time is short and the need is urgent. Target audiences that are predisposed to hear and act on your message. Consider the following audiences as a minimum, but add others as time and resources allow. Please share your creative ideas with the campaign team so we can develop a best practices grassroots approach.

#### Internal

- Boards
- Employees
- Physicians
- Volunteers
- Auxiliaries
- Foundations

#### External

- Donors
- Patient Support Groups
- Disease Advocacy Groups
- Vendors
- Organizations you support with funding or services
- Chambers of Commerce
- Civic Organizations

## **II. Help Build a Database of Friends**

A feature of our Web site ([www.fha.org/coalition](http://www.fha.org/coalition)) is an electronic newsletter and/or alert that will be distributed to supporters listed in our database during the current campaign. This feature allows us to update interested parties on a regular basis. More importantly, we can mobilize supporters for critical meetings, hearings, or votes before and during the upcoming legislative session. At present, the database includes all of the Florida Hospital Association (FHA) hospital member CEOs, CFOs, CNOs, CMOs, PR executives, and members of the association's professional membership groups. But we need more. Please help us grow this list of potential supporters by encouraging all internal audiences to sign up as individual Coalition members. Visit the "Coalition to Heal Florida's Healthcare" at: [www.fha.org/coalition](http://www.fha.org/coalition).

## **III. Direct Audiences to the Campaign Web Site**

All of the printed materials in this tool kit direct audiences to the campaign Web site, but there are other ways to promote the site. Consider the following:

- Add a link or banner ad to your own Web site.
- Include the Web site address on call-waiting or voice mail messages.
- Include the campaign Web site on your e-mail messages and cover fax sheets.
- Set up a computer in your cafeteria, lobby, or waiting rooms where employees and families can visit the site, sign up, and e-mail their legislator. Individual computers can be locked into one site.

## **IV. Create a Speaker's Bureau**

- The kit includes template letters and talking points on the tobacco tax and Medicaid. So you may want to consider creating a speakers bureau to communicate to others the value of an increase in the tobacco tax. Please feel free to use anything in the toolkit to develop your own handout materials. You can download additional copies from the FHA's Coalition Web site at: [www.fha.org/coalition](http://www.fha.org/coalition).

## **V. Expect Updates**

- Most of the materials in this kit are for public consumption. Others are geared to a more knowledgeable, internal audience. One piece – the information on the rationale behind the messages – is for your use only. Please do not distribute this.

As the legislative positions become clearer, we will develop additional materials: guest essays, op-eds, and more specific letters to the editor. But for now, our goal is to build consensus that the tobacco tax is needed to fund the Medicaid Medically Needy and Medicaid Aged/Disabled programs, and other healthcare priorities, to avert a genuine healthcare crisis in our state.

At this time, FHA does not plan on engaging in any paid media releases. The American Cancer Society will fund a media campaign and FHA will focus on a grassroots strategy and an intensive lobbying effort during the legislative session.