

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CENTRAL WEST TOBACCO CONTROL AREA NETWORK'S SYSTEM OF LOCAL TOBACCO CESSATION COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

In 2008, the Central West Tobacco Control Area Network's (TCAN) Cessation Sub-committee wanted to find ways to engage a broad spectrum of stakeholders with an interest in cessation in the Central West region. Building on the ideas and experiences of tobacco control staff at Region of Waterloo Public Health (ROWPH) and Hamilton Public Health Services (HPHS), the Central West TCAN Cessation Sub-committee recognized the potential of cessation communities of practice and decided to support the development of six CoPs within the area. The Central West TCAN Cessation Sub-committee credits these CoPs, along with other cessation programming, in helping to build momentum across the region that supports policy development and the use of common cessation language and messaging. Furthermore, by linking the CoPs with the TCAN structure, the Central West TCAN was able to take the CoP members' interests into account and inform the planning of large regional cessation-related events and training. By the end of 2010 there were 275 members from 127 different organizations across the six CoPs.

The LEARN report, "The development of the Central West Tobacco Control Area Network's System of Local Tobacco Cessation Communities of Practice" presents the results of a multiple case study which highlights how these six cessation CoPs in the Central West region were supported by the Central West TCAN Cessation Sub-committee with funding, a collective approach to planning and evaluation, and related tools. This resource outlines the circumstances which preceded the CoPs' development, the rationale for the CoPs, and steps taken to develop, launch and sustain them. Some of the CoPs were informed by Etienne Wenger and colleagues' work on CoP development. In light of this, a five-stage theory of community development from Wenger's work was used as an organizing framework for the LEARN report. This report can be found on the LEARN Documentation of Practice website: <http://www.ptcc-cfc.on.ca/english/learn/DoPs/> (listed by document title).

Key success factors from the practical experience of the six CoPs are outlined to help inform the development and implementation of other CoPs. The key success factors that are highlighted were identified in multiple cases, suggesting that they were not unique to one CoP, but rather apply more broadly. These factors include ensuring financial support, sharing the work and experience of planning and facilitating CoPs (through the Central West Cessation Sub-committee), allowing for flexibility in the ways and speed in which each CoP grows, and allowing members of the CoPs to set each CoP's priorities. Public health practitioners who intend to organize and support CoPs should consider these key success factors and incorporate them into their planning process from the beginning. The appendices to the report contain key documents developed by the Cessation PHNs and HPs coordinating the CoPs in the Central West TCAN area and include a logic model, project and CoP charters, environmental scan questions, event planning to-do lists, membership recruitment materials, an evaluation survey and a report on evaluation results. These documents are helpful resources for those seeking to develop their own communities of practice.

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