

# eTobacco Protocol Project: Electronic Tobacco Cessation Referral for Texas Healthcare Systems

**The Tobacco Research and Evaluation Team** is a grant-funded project of the Texas Department of State Health Services that provides consultation and support to healthcare systems for integration of an electronic tobacco cessation referral for patients ready to quit. This referral integration, the **eTobacco Protocol**, is an electronic tobacco cessation referral tool integrated into electronic medical records (EMRs) that allows providers to refer patients to the Texas Quitline with the click of a button. The Quitline is funded by the state of Texas and provides counseling to people who wish to quit tobacco at no charge. The Quitline provides nicotine replacement therapy to eligible, enrolled participants who are referred by their healthcare provider. Integration of the eTobacco Protocol into EMRs helps avoid the time-consuming, paper fax referral and provides a proactive way to engage tobacco users in the process of quitting and to offer support to quit.

**The Tobacco Research and Evaluation Team** supports healthcare systems that want to provide tobacco cessation support for their patients. That support includes:

- **Technical assistance and support throughout the integration of the eTobacco Protocol**
- **Clinical training support for tobacco treatment**
- **Support for tobacco referral away from the clinic EMR using the Texas Quitline mobile app**
- **Training and support for tobacco cessation advising by Community Health Workers in and outside the clinic**
- **Materials to educate and promote the eTobacco referral service**
- **Resources to help employee and care-giver quit tobacco**
- **On-going monitoring of tobacco cessation referral through the eTobacco Protocol**

Email [uttobacco@utexas.edu](mailto:uttobacco@utexas.edu) to discuss options for adding the eTobacco Protocol to your EMR.



**The eTobacco Protocol** has the potential to help meet clinical quality metrics, add value to services provided, and improve patient outcomes through risk reduction using the Ask-Advise-Refer approach to tobacco cessation referral.



**Ask:** Assess and document each patient's tobacco status (currently uses, has quit, or has never used) at every visit. Consider this an additional vital sign. The non-smoking patient's exposure to secondhand smoke should also be documented.



**Advise:** Use a clear, strong and personalized message to urge every tobacco user to quit. Use teachable moments and link current conditions as reasons to quit using tobacco.



**Refer:** Make a referral to the Quitline or available resources, during the visit, at the end of the visit, after the visit, during hospital stay, or at discharge from hospital.