

IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
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## **MORE HELP FOR PEOPLE TRYING TO QUIT SMOKING**

If your New Year's Eve resolution is to quit smoking, the government today announced some additional assistance to help you make good on that goal. Effective January 1<sup>st</sup>, two smoking cessation prescription drugs will be covered under the provincial drug plan.

Champix (varenicline) and Zyban (bupropion) are products that can be prescribed by a physician to assist people in quitting smoking. People are encouraged to use these products in conjunction with additional smoking cessation counselling and supports available through a variety of sources in Saskatchewan.

"Our government has made a strong commitment to help our residents lead healthier lives through reducing tobacco use," Health Minister Don McMorris said. "This is another measure under our Tobacco Reduction Strategy which is focused on the principles of prevention, protection and cessation."

"The Lung Association of Saskatchewan applauds this measure. Smoking is the leading preventable cause of death in Canada and kills 720 people annually in Saskatchewan from lung diseases alone. Smoking is an addiction and the Lung Association is pleased that the government is assisting people to overcome their addiction to nicotine by making these products more accessible," Vice-President of Health Education for the Lung Association of Saskatchewan Jennifer Miller said.

"This is great news as we know that drug therapy not only reduces withdrawal symptoms, but when combined with counselling may improve quit success rates from 5% to as much as 30%, and Saskatchewan is home to many pharmacists and other health care professionals trained in PACT or *Partnership to Assist with Cessation of Tobacco*" PACT trained Rosetown Pharmacist Debbie McCulloch said.

Earlier this year the government amended *The Tobacco Control Act, 2010* to create several new provisions which have been introduced in stages. On August 15<sup>th</sup> the provision to prohibit tobacco use on school grounds was proclaimed. October 1<sup>st</sup> brought forth changes that made it illegal to smoke in vehicles when children under the age of 16 are present, within three metres of doors, windows and air intakes of public buildings and in the enclosed common areas of multi-unit dwellings.

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The final stage will occur on April 1, 2011 and will include the provision that prohibits the sale of tobacco in pharmacies.

For more information on tobacco reduction in Saskatchewan, and supports and programs to help people quit smoking visit the Ministry of Health website at [www.health.gov.sk.ca](http://www.health.gov.sk.ca).

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For more information, contact:

Tyler McMurchy  
Communications Branch  
Saskatchewan Health  
Regina  
Phone: (306) 787-4083

Jennifer Miller  
Vice-President of Health Education  
Lung Association of Saskatchewan  
(306) 343-9511

Debbie McCullough  
Pharmacist  
Rosetown  
(306) 882-2134