

# FACT SHEET

## What do we know about the success of telephone Quitlines?

### What is The Quitline?

The Quitline is a telephone service that provides access to resources, advice, support and counseling to smokers who want to quit. The service is available throughout Australia for the cost of a local call on 13 7848 (13 QUIT). Quitline counselors can help smokers to make a plan to quit, and provide information about services and resources to support quitting attempts. The counselors can arrange to call back during the quitting process to provide support and encouragement<sup>1</sup>. Smokers can call the Quitline themselves or can be referred to the Quitline by a health professional.

For more information about the Quitline, see *Stopping Smoking* fact sheet on *Quitting services and products* at <[www.quit.org.au](http://www.quit.org.au)>

### Does the Quitline work?

A review of studies shows that telephone counseling, like Quitline, is effective at helping people to stop smoking, especially if people have three or more calls as part of their counseling<sup>2</sup>. Having the Quitline number included in anti-tobacco advertisements has been shown to increase calls to the Quitline<sup>3</sup>.

### Does the Quitline work for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people?

We know that not many Aboriginal and Torres Strait people call the Quitline, and although we can guess why, we do not really know the reasons for this. We also don't know whether the Quitline is helpful for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have tried to use it. However, in one Aboriginal community program, people who were encouraged to use the Quitline as part of the program liked it and found it useful<sup>4</sup>. Studies with Indigenous people in North America (one in the United States and one in Canada) found that Quitlines

were acceptable to them and successful in helping them to quit . The counselors working for one of these quitlines had cultural awareness and competency training, and they worked closely with Indigenous community groups<sup>5, 6</sup>.

It is likely that Quitlines could work very well for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in Australia if provided in a culturally appropriate way. Improving access to Quitlines and increasing its cultural appropriateness is one of the activities of the Tackling Indigenous Smoking Initiative<sup>7</sup>.

### References

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### Centre for Excellence in Indigenous Tobacco Control

Level 4, 207 Bouverie Street  
The University of Melbourne, Vic 3010  
Tel: (03) 8344 0883  
Email: [ceitc-info@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:ceitc-info@unimelb.edu.au)  
Web: [www.ceitc.org.au](http://www.ceitc.org.au)

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