

# Tobacco Use By Missouri Consumers of Mental Health Services

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## Prevalence of Tobacco Use by Missouri Mental Health Consumers

- 64% of Missourians who receive psychiatric services and/or alcohol and drug abuse services regularly use tobacco products. This is more than twice the number of the Missouri general adult population (25%). Nine percent of consumers with developmental disabilities reported tobacco use compared with a state rate of 25%.
- The rate of tobacco use among Missouri consumers of mental health services is 20% higher than rates among persons with mental illnesses nationally. It is estimated that persons with mental illnesses consumed around 50% of all tobacco products in the nation.
- 15% of consumers surveyed have quit using tobacco, compared to 50% of the general population nationally.
- 56% of Missouri consumers who regularly use tobacco would like to quit.
- 66% indicated that they tried to quit in the past but were unsuccessful. Most (74%) tried to quit on their own.

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*Around 70% of mental health agencies are interested in receiving technical assistance about tobacco cessation programming.*

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## Barriers to Tobacco Cessation

- Cigarettes in Missouri are relatively inexpensive to purchase, with the second lowest cigarette excise tax in the nation.
- Only 22% of Missouri mental health service providers surveyed are smoke free.
- Smoking is permitted in more public places in Missouri than in the majority of states.
- Among psychiatric/substance abuse consumers who smoke in Missouri, 67% report that they smoke to relieve stress and relax, 36% smoke for enjoyment, and 30% smoke out of boredom; some don't want to quit.
- Among consumers who regularly visit their primary care physician, only 42% of doctors followed up by asking if their patients wanted to try to quit.
- Most Missouri provider agencies do not offer in-house tobacco cessation programs, but rather refer consumers to external tobacco cessation programs or quitlines.

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*Missouri ranks 49<sup>th</sup> in spending on tobacco prevention*

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The data above were collected during a study conducted in 2008 by the Missouri Institute of Mental Health. The assessment was supported under a grant to the Missouri Department of Mental Health (DMH) from the Missouri Foundation for Health. A total of 586 Missourians receiving services through mental health centers funded by the Department of Mental Health and 177 DMH-contracted psychiatric, substance abuse, and developmental disabilities provider agencies completed surveys on smoking practices. In addition, 345 consumers at three regional DMH developmental disabilities centers took part in the study by completing questionnaires. Details are available at: [www.dmh.missouri.gov](http://www.dmh.missouri.gov)