**Virginia Department of Health Launches 31-Day Countdown to Help Tobacco Users Quit***Daily posts on Facebook and Twitter Lay Groundwork for Success*

(Richmond,Va.) The Virginia Department of Health is helping tobacco users get ready to quit by sharing tips and resources during Countdown to Quit Day. The countdown kicks off Oct. 20 and offers a different tip on VDH’s Facebook and Twitter platforms each day through Nov. 19.

Virginia Quit Day coincides with The Great American Smoke Out, Nov. 19, and celebrates the benefits of living tobacco free. “Quitting tobacco is difficult, but one of the best health decisions a person can make,” said State Health Commissioner Marissa J. Levine, MD, MPH, FAAFP. “The benefits of quitting begin almost immediately after a person quits and continue throughout life, not just for the tobacco user, but also for their family and friends.”

Tips cover topics such as preparing a quit plan, building social support, and understanding withdrawal symptoms. The Countdown is not just for people wanting to quit tobacco, but for their loved ones as well. The tips provided will help them support their loved ones when they decide to quit, making it more likely they will remain tobacco free.

One of the resources available year-round to tobacco users is the Virginia Quitline. This evidence-based model offers support for quitting, including free quit coaching, a free quit plan and free educational materials. Call 800-QUIT-NOW (800-784-8669) or visit [www.QuitNow.net/Virginia](http://www.quitnow.net/Virginia). Deaf and hearing-impaired TTY is 800-332-8615.

“Last year during the Countdown, calls to the Quitline increased 70 percent over call volume the previous year,” said Jayne Flowers, Tobacco Use Control Program director. “Based on people’s feedback from last year’s Countdown we updated our tips and resources to encourage even more tobacco users to take this life-changing step this November.”