

The Last Drag Smoking Cessation Program **Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science**

Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science offers a free smoking cessation program called *The Last Drag*. It is a series of seven, two-hour sessions targeted to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) smokers. This course provides tools, techniques, and personalized support that smokers need to become non-smokers. It was developed by the Coalition of Lavender-Americans on Smoking & Health (CLASH).

Classes are offered in the South Los Angeles area; day and evening sessions are available. For more information or to register for a class, contact Dr. Bruce Allen, Jr. at 323-563-5872.

About the Program

During the first two sessions participants identify and track their smoking patterns, recognize alternatives to smoking and time fillers, learn about nicotine replacement therapy, receive tips for weight management, and develop a plan for quitting. Session three is Quit Day. Two days later in Session four, participants share their stories and challenges, and receive support from fellow group members.

The following two sessions assist participants in developing short and long-term strategies for remaining smoke-free and include nutrition and fitness education. Session seven is a celebration and an opportunity to recognize that everyone has acquired knowledge and skills for quitting smoking.

Healthier Living

The Last Drag focuses on the smoker's physical, mental, social and spiritual health which incorporates the language, experiences and social issues unique to LGBT community.

Class facilitators are trained by the American Lung Association and can address issues such as smoke-friendly environments of gay bars and nightclubs; alcohol, methamphetamine and other drugs of abuse; and the fear of weight gain.

Facts about LGBT Smokers

(Taken from the 2005 California State LGBT Survey)

- Smoking prevalence for the overall California LGBT population is almost double that of the general population in the 2002 California Tobacco Survey, 30.4% vs. 15.4%.
- LGBT women's smoking prevalence is almost triple that of general population women (32.5% vs. 11.9%).
- LGBT men's smoking prevalence is about 50% higher than general population men (27.4% vs. 19.1%).
- Among all LGBT age groups, young adults 18-24 have the highest smoking prevalence (43.7%).
- Cigarette advertising efforts by the tobacco industry have effectively reached the California LGBT population. Nine out of ten (90%) LGBT adults recalled seeing cigarette ads in magazines.
- LGBT smokers are willing to quit. The majority of LGBT smokers reported a quit attempt within the last year (62.7%).

Funding

The Last Drag program is funded by the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services Tobacco Control & Prevention Program. This is the first time that Proposition 99 tobacco settlement funds have been used for a cessation program tailored specifically to the LGBT community in Los Angeles County.