

## WITH THE QUIT TO WIN! CHALLENGE, QUITTING SMOKING IS WORTH CELEBRATING! REGISTER AT [QUITCHALLENGE.CA](http://quitchallenge.ca) UNTIL FEBRUARY 6, 2023

**Baie-Comeau, January 12, 2023** – The Centre intégré de santé et de services sociaux (CISSS) de la Côte-Nord invites all smokers in the region who want to quit to register to the Quit to Win! Challenge by February 6<sup>th</sup> at [quitchallenge.ca](http://quitchallenge.ca).

The Challenge is back for a 24<sup>th</sup> year with its positive and motivating approach. From February 6<sup>th</sup> to March 19<sup>th</sup>, participants commit to not smoking for six weeks and receive free support based on their needs. This first goal is realistic for most smokers while being significant, since quitting for six weeks increases by six the chances of quitting for good.

### From prevention to celebration!

“In Quebec, the proportion of smokers is 13.3%, which represents nearly one million people. The Quit to Win! Challenge has a proven track record in supporting smokers who want to quit, and therefore making it possible for them to live better, while contributing to the prevention of several chronic diseases such as certain cancers and heart and lung diseases,” states Dr. Richard Fachehoun, North Shore Public Health Director.

Because smoking is more than just a simple habit, but rather a nicotine addiction, it is hard to quit, and it often takes several attempts. But success comes with pride, and we want to celebrate that! The new Challenge concept inspires smokers to butt out by reminding them that quitting is cause for celebration: newfound freedom, better health, more energy and savings.

### Teaming up with your pharmacist

Since quitting smoking may involve overcoming both a physical and a psychological dependence, smokers are encouraged to use various tools to increase their chances of success. One recommended winning strategy is to consult a health professional, namely their pharmacist, who can advise them at every step of their cessation journey, from preparation to maintenance. Pharmacists can develop a personalized quit plan and prescribe, as needed, a smoking cessation aid, including prescription medication.

“It is well known that one of the main reasons why smokers relapse is because they return to smoking as a crutch to relieve the discomfort associated with stress, cravings, and nicotine withdrawal. It is essential to guide them towards the right tools to face these obstacles if we want them to succeed in quitting. Pharmacists, as local health professionals, are well placed to support them,” explains pharmacist Alexandre Chagnon, director of the digital health technology program at Université Laval and spokesperson of the Challenge.

### Quitting is possible with support

In addition to being able to rely on strength in numbers as thousands of Quebecers will take up the Challenge at the same time, participants will also have access to a range of free support tools during and after the six weeks:

- The [quitchallenge.ca](http://quitchallenge.ca) website and a personal profile accessible upon registration;
- Encouragement emails;
- The Facebook and Instagram communities;




- The free, confidential I QUIT NOW services: in person at the Quit Smoking Centres, by telephone at 1 866 JARRETE, online on the I QUIT KNOW website (tobaccofreequebec.ca), or by text through the SMAT text messaging service.

And for some added motivation, a grand prize of \$5000 in cash, offered by the Challenge, will be drawn among all the participants who succeeded in not smoking for six weeks.

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## Annex: Available resources

<p><b>1- Help online</b></p>	<p><a href="http://www.tobaccofreequebec.ca/">http://www.tobaccofreequebec.ca/</a></p>
<p><b>2- Help by telephone</b></p> 	<p>1 866 jarrete (527-7383) Free Monday to Thursday from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., and Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.</p>
<p><b>3- Help by text</b></p> 	<p>SMAT (mobile application) Free</p>
<p><b>4- Help in person</b></p> 	<p>Quit Smoking Centre – North Shore (Personalized individual or group meetings, based on the sector)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Haute-Côte-Nord-Manicouagan: 418 296-2572, ext. 315202</li> <li>• Port-Cartier-Sept-Îles: 418 962-9761, ext. 414128 or 414161</li> <li>• Minganie: 418 538-2212, ext. 542314</li> <li>• Lower North Shore: 418 461-2144, ext. 611417 or 611438</li> <li>• Fermont: 418 287-5461, ext. 712226</li> </ul>