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## News Release

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### **VA HEALTHCARE – VISN 4 TAKES DRAMATIC STEP TO HELP VETERANS AND EMPLOYEES QUIT SMOKING**

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PITTSBURGH – September 17, 2009 – VA Healthcare – VISN 4 is taking a new and dramatic step to help Veterans and employees quit smoking. VISN 4 has contracted with Seattle-based Free & Clear, Inc. to provide telephone smoking cessation counseling services for enrolled Veterans and employees throughout VISN 4, which includes 10 medical centers and 44 community-based outpatient clinics.

“The Quit for Life program is a novel approach to tobacco cessation and initiates a convenient, proven intervention to help Veterans and employees quit smoking,” said Michael Moreland, VISN 4 Network Director.

Quitting smoking often requires multiple attempts. Using counseling or medication alone increases the chance of a quit attempt being successful; the combination of both is even more effective. Quit for Life utilizes a combination of medication support, phone-based cognitive behavioral coaching, web-based learning and other support tools. Quit for Life is at least 8 times more effective than quitting “cold turkey” without support.

Veterans wishing to enroll in the Free & Clear, Inc.: Quit for Life program should let their VA provider know they wish to participate in the program. VA employees can contact the employee health clinic at their local VA medical center to enroll in the program.

For more information about the Free & Clear, Inc.: Quit for Life program, visit their website at <http://www.freeclear.com/quit-for-life/>.

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