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Recommendations for Health Professionals

Health professionals are a critical resource for advancing the agenda of tobacco control, by actions which empower the community, catalyse policy and promote technical assistance to other stakeholder groups. They contribute the principal agency through which information on the health consequences of tobacco is communicated to people as well as policy-makers. They also provide direct services for tobacco cessation, through counselling and other forms of therapy. Recognizing the importance of their role, it is recommended that health professionals

1. Must strongly advocate tobacco cessation among colleagues and provide special cessation services to them, since tobacco use by health professionals has a negative influence on the community.
2. Keep medical conferences and other events organized by associations of health professionals completely tobacco-free and avoid sponsorship of any kind from tobacco companies or their affiliates.
3. Ensure that health facilities are completely tobacco-free, over and beyond what is required by the law.
4. Evolve guidelines and specific recommendations for advancing tobacco control and advocate for implementing these recommendations with the government and civil society.
5. Utilize all opportunities for patient contact to enquire about tobacco use and advise about tobacco cessation, as may be required.
6. Provide broad-based cessation services which include counselling for behaviour change for all tobacco users, and pharmacotherapy, where essential.
7. Partner civil society organizations and governmental agencies in promoting community awareness on tobacco-related issues.