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**Seven Will Get You... Smoke-free?**

MADISON, Wis. – President Barack Obama says he has had trouble giving up smokes. Maybe he could benefit from a simple new tool showing promise in predicting who is most likely to relapse—and why.

A seven-question survey—WI-PREPARE (Wisconsin Predicting Patient’s Relapse)—created at the University of Wisconsin Center for Tobacco Research and Intervention (UW-CTRI) has proven more accurate than other surveys that have been used to identify those prone to relapse.

The first three questions are fairly routine: How strong are your cravings on a scale of one to 10? What time of the day do you typically light up your first cigarette? How many total cigarettes have you smoked? They are meant to assess a smoker’s dependence on tobacco.

“But the other four questions are quite novel for a short questionnaire assessing proneness to smoking relapse,” says Dr. Megan Piper, one of the survey creators. “These questions assess environmental factors and individual differences that can influence a person’s tendency to relapse.”

The four additional questions reveal smokers’ exposure to other smokers, smoking restrictions in their homes and their workplaces, as well as their education levels.

“Those novel questions, especially the one pertaining to education level, allowed WI-PREPARE to predict short-term relapse better than the standard questionnaire used today, the Fagerstrom Test of Nicotine Dependence,” says Piper.

UW-CTRI researchers support recommendations drawn from the U.S. Public Health Service’s clinical practice guidelines on treating tobacco use and dependence. These include participation in formalized cessation programs, support groups, “quitlines” offering confidential coaching, one-on-one counseling, and use of nicotine replacement therapy and other medications.

“The WI-PREPARE can help clinicians recognize patients at greatest risk and possibly in need of more aggressive interventions,” says Piper. “Treatments could be also tailored to specific factors that place people at highest risk of relapse.”

UW-CTRI is a national leader in conducting and implementing research on treating tobacco use. The center’s focus is twofold—to better understand tobacco dependence and to increase the use of effective treatments to help smokers quit for good.