



QuitlineNC

1-800-QUIT-NOW  
1-800-784-8669

*“Most merchants are open to promoting QuitlineNC. It is a start in changing the point-of-sale environment. Since merchants are more open than previously thought, the team could next educate on menthol as a social justice issue. The team feels strongly that a trusted relationship is a critical element to success.”*

Kim Bayha, Health Policy Coordinator for Tobacco Control.

## **QuitlineNC Success Story: Promoting Tobacco-Free Messages and Quit Support at Healthy Corner Stores**

**Summary:** Mecklenburg County Public Health’s Office of Policy & Prevention is working with area corner stores to provide healthier food choices for the communities they serve. Fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, dairy and nutritious snacks are available at participating stores. Each store also provides information on QuitlineNC, for those interested in quitting tobacco. In 2015, assessments around nutrition, built environment and tobacco were conducted at 200 stores with 10 selected for policy or environmental changes.

**Challenge:** Mecklenburg County formed partnerships with 10 locally owned corner stores within “Public Health Priority” neighborhoods within Charlotte. These corner stores, in lower income neighborhoods, typically sell a plethora of tobacco products and have tobacco ads outside and inside. In N.C. local governments are preempted from creating polices around the sale and marketing of tobacco products. Point-of-sale marketing of tobacco is a strong influencer for youth tobacco use and serves as a trigger to adults trying to quit or stay quit. Although local regulation is not allowed, merchants can voluntarily agree to make small changes, such as promoting QuitlineNC and reducing the number of tobacco ads displayed. Reducing tobacco ads can be a delicate subject, as tobacco sales can produce important revenue for the stores. The team was unsure what changes could be made around tobacco.

**Solution:** When the Healthy Corner Store team members make visits to their assigned stores, they assess where healthier items can be placed to be more marketable and offer resources such as posters and promotional items. These visits provide a great opportunity to suggest that merchants display large QuitlineNC posters and even remove some tobacco ads. In addition, team members can educate merchants on youth access issues. Relationship building is critical, and sets the stage for these conversations to take place.



QuitlineNC marketing at a Healthy Corner Store checkout counter



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**Lessons Learned:** *“Through relationship building and education, staff are having success with small changes to improve the store environment and promote health, even influencing merchants to remove a few tobacco ads! Most merchants are open to promoting QuitlineNC. It is a start in changing the point-of-sale environment. Since merchants are more open than previously thought, the team could next educate on menthol as a social justice issue. The team feels strongly that a trusted relationship is a critical element to success.”*  
Kim Bayha, Health Policy Coordinator for Tobacco Control.



Before: Tobacco ad



After: Health Corner Store Sign

### Contact Information:

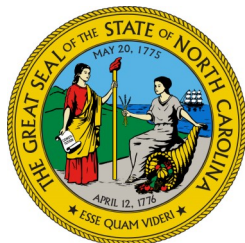
Kim Bayha, Health Policy Coordinator for Tobacco Control

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Website: [www.meckhealth.org](http://www.meckhealth.org) - see Healthy Food Options Around the Corner page.



NC DEPARTMENT OF  
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HUMAN SERVICES**  
Division of Public Health

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