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## **EX PROGRAM BY TRUTH INITIATIVE® AND MCLEOD HEALTH JOIN FORCES TO HELP EMPLOYEES, PATIENTS LIVE TOBACCO FREE**

*With Support from Truth Initiative, the EX® Program Brings Personalized Quit Smoking Tools to the McLeod Health Employee Wellness Program*

**WASHINGTON, D.C. (February 16, 2021)** – [The EX Program](#) from Truth Initiative®, the national public health organization inspiring lives free from smoking, vaping and nicotine, today announced that it is joining forces with McLeod Health, a leading healthcare network.

The EX Program will be available to the nearly 8,900 employees working for the McLeod Health system of hospitals and physician practices in northeastern South Carolina. The McLeod Healthier You Program will integrate the EX Program into its overall wellness package for employees. With the EX Program, McLeod Health will now provide all employees who use tobacco—including smokers with chronic conditions such as diabetes or heart disease—tailored support to quit.

As part of its McLeod Lung Cancer Screening Program outreach, McLeod will also offer the EX Program to deliver even more resources to support lung cancer patients and those people looking to quit tobacco use.

The latest [CDC National Health Interview Survey](#) shows more than 50 million U.S. adults used some form of tobacco in 2019—and almost 1 in 5 current tobacco users used 2 or more tobacco products. According to research from 2015, nearly 70% of smokers said they wanted to quit and providing support to quit is especially critical now. A national survey in 2018 also found that over half of adult cigarette smokers reported trying to quit in the previous year.

With increased anxiety, disrupted routines, and social isolation from COVID-19, many people are struggling with addiction. On top of that, the stresses of economic uncertainty and unemployment across the country have translated into [more smoking](#).

“Digital interventions are particularly powerful in addressing the unique needs of tobacco users in today’s environment,” says Jenn Gendron, Head of Development, Innovations at Truth Initiative. “Here at the EX Program, our proven digital approach is making a difference every day in helping hundreds of thousands of people break free from tobacco addiction. We are very pleased to welcome McLeod Health to our program. We look forward to helping them bring



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evidenced-based support and tools to more people looking to quit smoking, vaping, and chew tobacco for good.”

Developed in collaboration with Mayo Clinic, the EX Program is an enterprise-level, digital health program for tobacco addiction for employers and health plans. The EX Program grew out of Truth Initiative's field-leading research and long history of building engaging digital interventions. To date, more than 910,000 participants have enrolled in EX, developing the skills and confidence that are critical for quitting tobacco successfully. Research has shown that individuals who use all components of the EX quit plan are four times more likely to quit than others. In response to the e-cigarette epidemic, in 2019, the EX Program grew to include cessation support for e-cigarettes, as well as resources for parents who want to help their child quit vaping.

For more information on the EX Program, please visit [theexprogram.com](http://theexprogram.com). For more information about Truth Initiative, please visit [truthinitiative.org](http://truthinitiative.org). For more information on McLeod Health, please visit [mcleodhealth.org](http://mcleodhealth.org).

**About McLeod Health:**

Founded in 1906, McLeod Health is a locally owned and managed, not for profit organization supported by the strength of approximately **750** members on its medical staff and more than **2,700** licensed nurses (Registered Nurses; Advanced Practice Nurses – including Certified Nurse Anesthetists, Nurse Practitioners and Certified Nurse Midwives; as well as Licensed Practical Nurses). McLeod Health is also composed of approximately **8,900** employees and more than **75** physician practices throughout its 18-county service area. With seven hospitals, McLeod Health operates three Health and Fitness Centers, a Sports Medicine and Outpatient Rehabilitation Center, Hospice and Home Health Services. The hospitals within McLeod Health include: McLeod Regional Medical Center, McLeod Health Dillon, McLeod Health Loris, McLeod Health Seacoast, McLeod Health Cheraw, McLeod Health Clarendon and McLeod Behavioral Health.

**About the EX<sup>®</sup> Program:**

The EX Program is the only quit-tobacco program that combines the scientific leadership in digital tobacco solutions from Truth Initiative with a proven treatment model from Mayo Clinic. This program provides the personalized support that tobacco users—smokers, vapers, and chew tobacco users—need for the behavioral, social, and physical aspects of addiction. The EX Program includes a personalized quit plan with interactive exercises; live chat coaching



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with experts; the longest-running and largest community of current and former tobacco users; text messaging tailored to the participant; and quit medication delivered to the participant's home. Clients receive ongoing program performance reports, promotional materials, a dedicated client success manager, and more. Visit [www.theexprogram.com](http://www.theexprogram.com) to learn more.

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