

Eliminate Tobacco, Save Lives

By Cynthia A. Weaver, MD
SDSMA President



Tobacco use is the No. 1 preventable cause of death in the United States. It doesn't have to be this way.

As physicians, our patients look to us to help them make decisions that will allow them to live longer, healthier lives. It is our role as physicians to help our patients stop smoking or using smokeless tobacco.

We're at a crossroads in our state now, as research from the South Dakota Tobacco-Free Kids Network shows that public opinion supports comprehensive legislation to ban tobacco use in public places. All people have a right to work sites and public places that are free from the hazards of tobacco smoke.

I encourage you to read this special issue of *South Dakota Medicine* dedicated to smoking cessation. You will find

articles on the usage of tobacco in our state, the harmful components in secondhand smoke, the effects of secondhand on fetal and child development, understanding addiction, the use of South Dakota's QuitLine, smoking and cardiovascular disease and the genetic components to nicotine addiction, among others.

Thank you, and congratulations to the SDSMA staff, the South Dakota Department of Health and the contributing physicians who have worked so hard to create this special issue of *South Dakota Medicine*.

A handwritten signature in gold ink that reads "Cynthia A. Weaver MD". The signature is written in a cursive style.