

F R O M	Name & Title	Dr. Letitia Dzirasa, Commissioner 	Health Department  AGENCY REPORT	
	Agency Name & Address	Health Department 1001 E. Fayette Street Baltimore, Maryland 21201		
	Subject	18-0311 – Nicotine Replacement Therapy Products - Sale and Distribution		

To: President and Members  
of the City Council  
c/o 409 City Hall

February 25, 2020

The Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) is pleased to have the opportunity to review 18-0311 – Nicotine Replacement Therapy Products – Sale and Distribution. The purpose of this legislation is to require certain retailers to sell nicotine replacement therapy products; to mandate certain retail display and packaging requirements; to require certain employers and facilities to offer nicotine replacement therapy products at no cost; to define certain terms; provide for a special effective date; to establish certain penalties, and to generally relate to the sale and distribution of nicotine replacement therapy products. **BCHD supports this legislation.**

In Baltimore, 20% of adult residents were cigarette smokers in 2018.<sup>1</sup> Nationally, it is estimated that 13.7% of Americans were cigarette smokers in 2018.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, tobacco use has grown amongst youth in Maryland, with 21.6% of high schoolers in Maryland reporting that they used any tobacco product in 2017.<sup>3</sup>

Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) has been proven to be a successful tool to aid in smoking cessation, as it provides the user with low doses of nicotine through methods other than tobacco smoke, such as gum or a patch.<sup>4</sup> By providing low doses of nicotine, NRT lessens the symptoms of withdrawal and makes it easier for the individual to transition from smoking to abstinence.<sup>5</sup> A systematic review of 132 clinical trials found that every commercially available form of NRT can assist those who are attempting to quit smoking, increasing success rates between 50-70%.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Robert J. Wood Foundation. n.d. "County Health Rankings & Roadmaps." Accessed February 19, 2020. <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/maryland/2019/rankings/baltimore-city/county/outcomes/overall/snapshot>.

<sup>2</sup> CDC. 2019. "Current Cigarette Smoking Among Adults in the United States." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. November 18, 2019. [https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/fact\\_sheets/adult\\_data/cig\\_smoking/index.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/adult_data/cig_smoking/index.htm).

<sup>3</sup> CDC Tobacco Free. 2019. "Extinguishing the Tobacco Epidemic in Maryland." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. April 11, 2019. <https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/about/osh/state-fact-sheets/maryland/index.html>.

<sup>4</sup> Wadgave, Umesh, and L Nagesh. 2016. "Nicotine Replacement Therapy: An Overview." *International Journal of Health Sciences* 10 (3): 425–35.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Stead, Lindsay F., Rafael Perera, Chris Bullen, David Mant, Jamie Hartmann-Boyce, Kate Cahill, and Tim Lancaster. 2012. "Nicotine Replacement Therapy for Smoking Cessation." *The Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews* 11 (November): CD000146. <https://doi.org/10.1002/14651858.CD000146.pub4>.

Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable disability and death in the United States and smoking cessation can lead to better health outcomes.<sup>7</sup> Smoking quadruples the risk of coronary heart disease and stroke.<sup>8</sup> People who smoke are 25 times more likely to develop lung cancer than those who do not.<sup>9</sup> After quitting, however, it is found that many of these risks decrease substantially, with some even dropping to the risks that nonsmokers face.<sup>10</sup>

Council Bill 18-0311 would require tobacco retailers to sell NRT and to display NRT near the tobacco products for sale. A review of other jurisdictions across the U.S. indicates this may be a novel approach to expanding access to NRT. By requiring tobacco retailers to display and sell NRT, residents who purchase tobacco products will see an increase in the availability and visibility of NRT products. NRT is most commonly found and sold in pharmacies; increasing the number of outlets selling NRT through this ordinance will greatly broaden the availability of NRT products citywide for residents.

As stated above, smoking tobacco is can be detrimental to one's health, and cessation is critical to creating more favorable health outcomes.<sup>11</sup> NRT is a proven method to improve the success of cessation attempts and if more retailers, especially those that sell tobacco, sell NRT, then it is more likely that those who are smoking tobacco will successfully quit.

For these reasons, BCHD **supports** this legislation and requests this committee issue a favorable report.

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<sup>7</sup> CDC Tobacco Free. 2019. "Health Effects of Cigarette Smoking." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. March 4, 2019.

[https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/fact\\_sheets/health\\_effects/effects\\_cig\\_smoking/index.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/health_effects/effects_cig_smoking/index.htm).

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.