Brain Awareness Week (March 13-19) LTE Template

Drafted February 20, 2017

Tobacco Increases Stroke Risk—Especially for African Americans

Dear Editor,

START YOUR LETTER BY SHARING THAT BRAIN AWARENESS WEEK IS MARCH 13-19. THEN EXPLAIN THAT BRAIN AWARENESS WEEK IS A GLOBAL CAMPAIGN TO INCREASE PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE PROGRESS AND BENEFITS OF BRAIN RESEARCH. NOW INTRODUCE THE TOBACCO CONNECTION BY SHARING THAT ONE THING WE KNOW FOR SURE ABOUT BRAINS IS THAT USING TOBACCO CAN DO SERIOUS DAMAGE.

NOW HIGHLIGHT HOW TOBACCO USE HURTS THE BRAIN. START WITH THE FACT THAT INDIVIDUALS WHO SMOKE ARE 2-4 TIMES MORE LIKELY TO SUFFER FROM STROKE THAN NON-SMOKERS. TALK ABOUT HOW SERIOUS STROKES CAN BE. YOU CAN FIND INFO ON STROKES AT <http://www.stroke.org/understand-stroke/what-stroke>.

NOW FOCUS ON DISPARITIES, TALK ABOUT HOW AFRICAN AMERICANS ARE MORE IMPACTED BY STROKE THAN ANY OTHER RACIAL GROUP IN AMERICA, MEANING AFRICAN AMERICANS THAT SMOKE ARE AT ESPECIALLY HIGH RISK (<http://www.stroke.org/understand-stroke/impact-stroke/minorities-and-stroke>). YOU MIGHT CONSIDER ADDING THAT AFRICAN AMERICANS ARE MORE LIKELY TO BECOME DISABLED AND EXPERIENCE DIFFICULTIES WITH DAILY LIVING AND ACTIVITIES.

NOW PROVIDE SOME GOOD NEWS -- QUITTING SMOKING REDUCES YOUR STROKE RISK. IN FACT, AFTER FIVE YEARS SMOKE FREE, YOUR STROKE RISK IS REDUCED TO THE SAME AS A LIFETIME NON-SMOKER.

CLOSE BY SHARING FREE QUIT TOBACCO HELP IS AVAILABLE BY CALLING THE WISCONSIN TOBACCO QUIT LINE FOR FREE AT 1-800-QUIT NOW. FOR MORE ON LOCAL TOBACCO PREVENTION AND CONTROL EFFORTS, VISIT/CALL **(CONTACT INFO)**.