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Background

- CDC sponsored *Tips from Former Smokers* federal media campaign has significantly increased calls to Quitlines in nearly all states.¹
- CDC *Tips* ads have also led to substantial increases in call volume to North Carolina Quitline (QuitlineNC) and played a major role in sustaining high call volumes in absence of paid statewide media promotion
- Free nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) is another well documented effective state strategy for increasing state Quitline call volume.²⁻⁵
- Whether free state-based NRT can augment impact of CDC *Tips* campaign on Quitline calls is unknown

Research Questions

- To determine impact of free state-based NRT for all callers promoted via press release during 2013 *Tips* Campaign; and
- To determine impact of 8 weeks of free state-based NRT for all callers in 2015 leading up to World No Tobacco Day, promoted via email blast during 2015 *Tips* Campaign

QuitlineNC Offers Nicotine Replacement Therapy at No Cost for a Limited Time

Pat McCrory, Governor
 Aldona Z. Wos, M.D., Secretary
 North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
 For Immediate Release
 April 5, 2013
 Contact: Julie Henry 919-855-4840
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Raleigh, N.C. – The N.C. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is providing extra help for North Carolina tobacco users who want to quit for good. QuitlineNC, the state's toll-free telephone and online support service to help tobacco users quit, is making nicotine replacement therapy (patches, gum or lozenges) available at no cost while supplies last for North Carolina residents who enroll in quit coaching.

"Tobacco use causes serious diseases that shorten life," said DHHS Secretary Aldona Wos, M.D. "We want to support the efforts of smokers and other tobacco users who choose to take responsibility for their own health by quitting."

North Carolinians ready to quit smoking may call QuitlineNC at 1-800-QUIT-NOW or 1-800-784-8669 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, or visit www.quitline.com to sign up for the over-the-counter medication and support. QuitlineNC telephone service is offered in English and Spanish, with translation services available for other languages.

North Carolina tobacco users can receive a limited supply of free nicotine replacement therapy after they enroll with QuitlineNC for a four-call program. Each enrollee will develop a personalized quit plan with a quit coach. The supply of medication available to each individual varies, depending on insurance coverage, and is available on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Health officials say the combination of Quitline support and medication is a proven way to increase the odds that tobacco users will quit for good.

"Nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) has been proven in well-designed research studies to significantly increase quit rates, especially when used in combination with cessation counseling such as QuitlineNC provides," Wos said.

Want to Quit?

1-800-QUIT-NOW
 QuitlineNC.com

Call us on
World No Tobacco Week
 May 20-31, 2015

For expert quit coaching & eight weeks of
FREE Nicotine Patches

Free Patches

To qualify, you must:

- Call May 20-31
- Be 18 or older
- Call from a NC phone number
- Commit to a Quit Date

Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW or 1-800-784-8669
 WWW.QuitlineNC.com

For service in Spanish call
 1-855-DE-JELO-YA or 1-855-335-3569
 Connect with a Quit Coach and more than
 double your chances of quitting for good.
 QuitlineNC is free, private and available
 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Results

Figure 1. Fiscal Year 2013 QuitlineNC Monthly Call Volume and Promotion

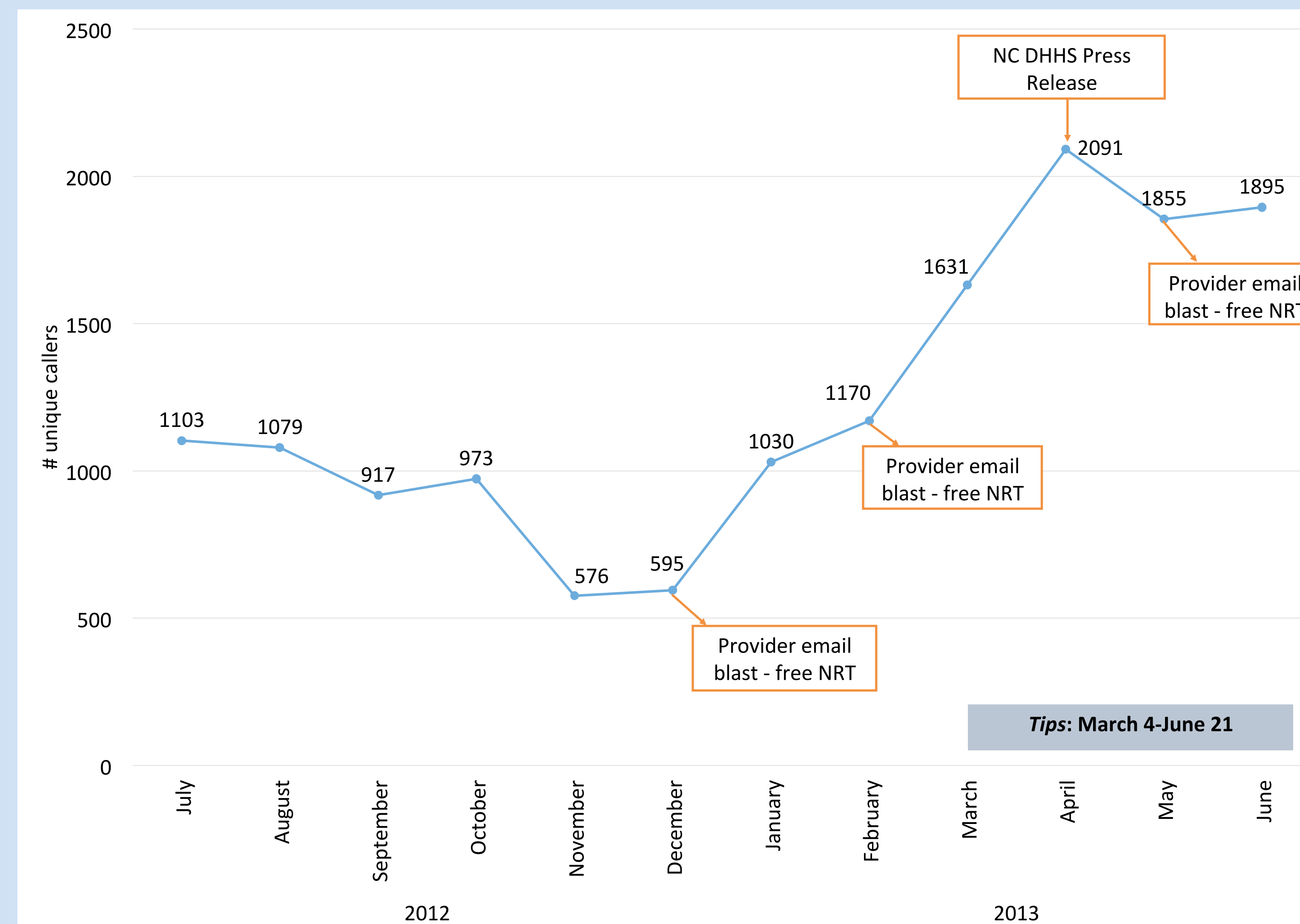
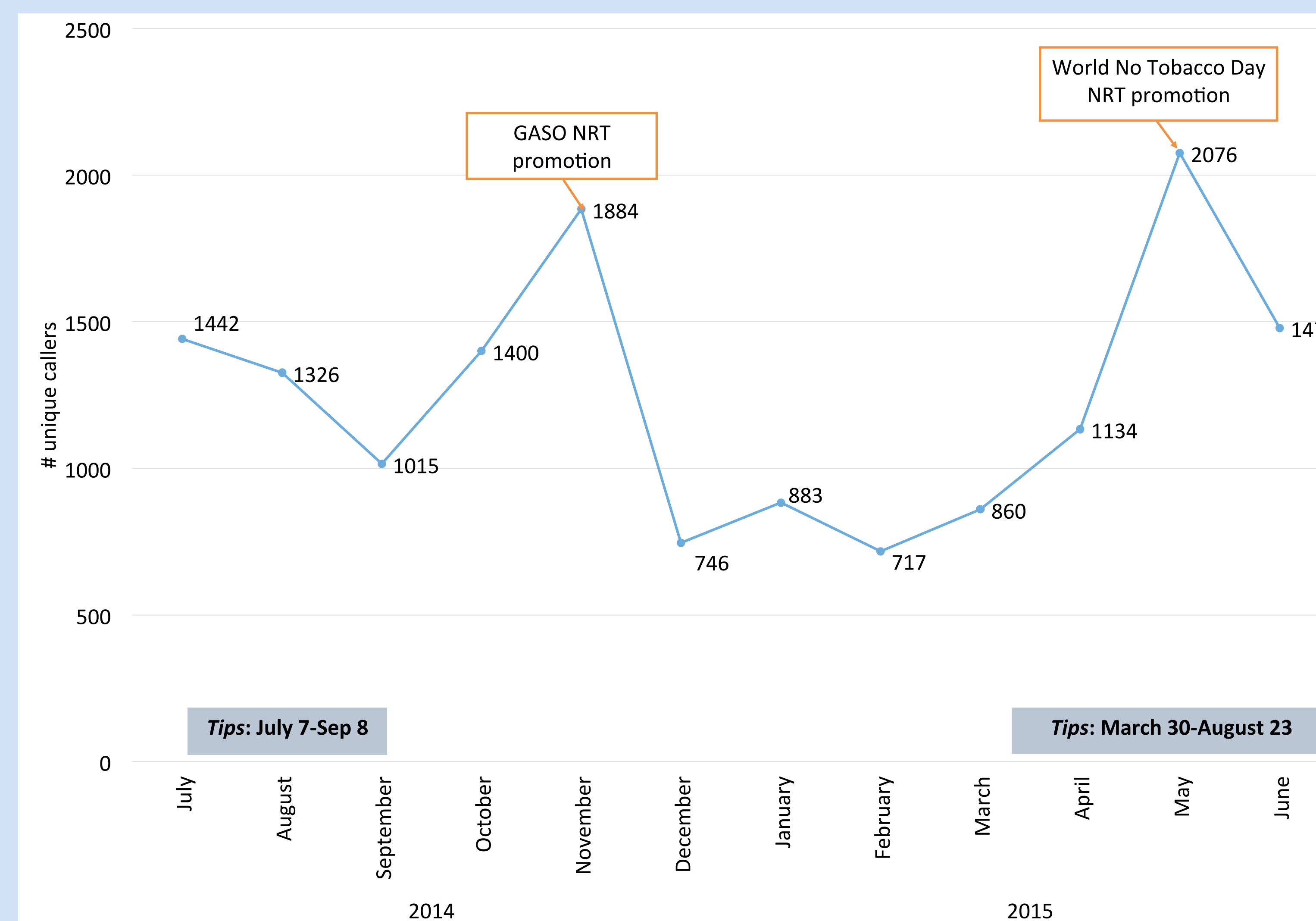


Figure 2. Fiscal Year 2015 QuitlineNC Monthly Call Volume and Promotion



Results

No-cost free NRT promotion in absence of *Tips* drives call volume

Fiscal Year 2013:

- Gradual increases in monthly call volume following promotion via two email blasts to providers

Fiscal Year 2015:

- Spike in calls as a result of NRT offer, promoted via email blast and press release surrounding Great American Smokeout

Tips Campaign significantly increases call volume

Fiscal Year 2013:

- Average weekly call volume increased 59.9% during the campaign compared to the preceding time period (p=.005)

Fiscal Year 2015:

- Average weekly call volume increased 78.1% during the 2014 campaign compared to the preceding time period (p=.007)
- Average weekly call volume increased 97.0% during the 2015 campaign compared to the preceding time period (p=.008)

No-cost free NRT promotion during *Tips* campaign – additive impact critical to sustaining overall call volume

Fiscal Year 2013:

- Average weekly call volume increased 45.1% in the 4 weeks following compared to the 4 weeks preceding the free NRT press release (p=.03)

Fiscal Year 2015:

- Call volume increased 210% during the 10 day free NRT promotional period compared to the preceding 10 days (p=.01)
- 10 day call volume accounted for 22% of all calls during 17 week *Tips* run

Limitations

- Results show associations, not causality
- Other unmeasured factors may be at play
- Results though are robust across many dimensions

Conclusions

- No-cost promotion of NRT is an effective and important promotional tool for QuitlineNC even in the absence of large state-based paid media promotion.
- QuitlineNC call volume increases substantially when *Tips* campaign is on air, and the CDC campaign sustains overall state-based call volumes.
- Concurrently conducting no-cost free NRT promotion during *Tips* campaigns results in higher call volumes than achieved by either strategy used in isolation, allowing QuitlineNC to leverage federally funded media messages, maximize the impact of available state resources, and sustain overall annual call volume.

Methods

- QuitlineNC caller intake data analyzed to assess call volume for callers registering for quitline services:
 - 4 weeks prior to and 4 weeks following the 2013 free NRT press release during the 2013 *Tips* campaigns; and
 - 10 days preceding 2015 promotional period and 10 days included in promotional period during 2015 *Tips* campaign
- T-tests and Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney tests used to compare differences in average call volume before and after promotional periods and *Tips* campaigns

This work was supported by the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services Quitline Capacity evaluation contract. Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services. The authors have no conflicts of interest to report.

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