

Group to address tobacco use

The committee was initiated from a \$75,000 Communities of Excellence grant in conjunction with the Wagoner County Family Service Council.

The group met Jan. 15 in Coweta and continues to organize under the leadership of Tobacco Use Prevention Coordinator Debbie Brewster.

Subsequent meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month at the Wagoner County DHS Conference Room in Wagoner and on the third Tuesday of each month at the Coweta Public Library conference room.

The January meeting featured new information regarding the Oklahoma Quit Line that now offers on-line support. This support is called the Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline Web Coach for people wanting to quit tobacco.

Brewster said the new feature of the Quit Line allows people to tailor a program to themselves via online access. The website is www.ok.gov/tset/Programs/Helpline.html. Phone access is offered at 1-800-784-8669.

Brewster said the initial year of grant funding for this group is dedicated to planning. The committee will prepare a plan and work with community partners to accomplish the identified goals and strategies.

The plan may be continued for five years with additional funds to support efforts and ongoing planning.

“This is an opportunity to change tobacco use in our county,” said James R. Turner, administrator with the Wagoner County Health Department. “Knowing a future benefit of these changes will be addressing health issues related to tobacco use.”

“The group will address prevention of youth initiation, advertising and the method in which tobacco is sold, to eliminate secondhand smoke exposure and promoting tobacco cessation services,” he added.

Attending the January meeting in Coweta were Lissa Brown with the Coweta Policy Department, Mike Wilson with Coweta Public Schools, Tom Tillotson with the City of Coweta, Christy McCollough with Porter Consolidated School, Wanda James with Area Prevention Resource Center and Johnna Sue Blair with Wagoner Community Hospital.

Others were Susan Johnson with the Post Adjudication Review Board, Northeast Regional SWAT Coordinator D’Elbie Walker, Bill Wagoner with the Eastern Oklahoma Development District and Leslie Vick, Barbara Volz, Marjorie Lyons and Debbie Brewster with the Wagoner County Health Department.

Anyone interested in the future of children, youth and families is invited to participate in meetings. The next session is planned Feb. 18 in Coweta at 1 p.m.

To learn more, give Brewster a call at 485-4522.