



Press release  
For immediate release

## **The *Quit to Win! Challenge* is back to support young and not-so-young smokers who want to quit**

**Pharmacist Alexandre Chagnon, new spokesperson for the *Challenge***

**Montréal, January 4, 2022** – At a time when many Quebecers still want to stop smoking, the beginning of this year marks the return of the *Quit to Win! Challenge* to help smokers butt out. The *Challenge* encourages smokers to commit to not smoking for 6 weeks, from February 7 to March 20, a realistic first goal. To promote this unmissable annual event, the campaign is introducing its new spokesperson, pharmacist Alexandre Chagnon, namely to reach young smokers. Registration is open at [quitchallenge.ca](http://quitchallenge.ca).

### **The *Challenge*, a winning formula**

The campaign's advertising concept aims to inspire smokers to sign up by using humour to highlight some of the benefits of butting out, including better health, newfound freedom, and significant savings. With its proven approach based on the support it offers and strength in numbers, the *Challenge* is truly a key ally for all Quebecers who want to quit. The *Challenge's* positive and motivating formula is particularly appealing to young adults, who are a priority target of the 2020-2025 Tobacco-Free Quebec Strategy.

Knowing that quitting smoking means overcoming both a physical and a psychological dependence, smokers have everything to gain by relying on different types of support to increase their chances of success. "The *Challenge* is a remarkable initiative that is an invaluable tool in our collective fight against tobacco use. We must continue to redouble our efforts to encourage more Quebecers to quit smoking and support them in this brave decision. I thank the entire team behind the *Challenge*; your dedication to this important cause is admirable," says Christian Dubé, Minister of Health and Social Services.

### **A new pharmacist spokesperson**

Breaking free from tobacco is difficult and often takes several attempts. This is why smokers are encouraged to see a health professional who can support them in their preparation, namely by helping them choose the treatment that is right for them, but also during and after quitting. It was therefore only natural for the *Challenge* to recruit a pharmacist as its new spokesperson, and it found the perfect fit in Alexandre Chagnon. Often featured on the radio as a health contributor

as well as in several publications, he urges Quebec smokers to sign up for the *Quit to Win! Challenge* to butt out and enjoy the benefits of quitting.

“Quitting smoking is a powerful action that contributes to preventing health problems such as certain cancers and heart and lung diseases. As pharmacists and local professionals, we can play a key role to support smokers at every step of their smoking cessation journey. This therefore goes beyond simply prescribing treatments! Moreover, thanks to its social media presence, the *Challenge* is perfectly suited to reach young adults, a target group at the heart of my professional activities,” explains pharmacist Alexandre Chagnon, an expert in digital health and director of the digital health technology program at Laval University.

### **Wider-ranging support**

To better reach young smokers, the *Challenge* is proud to expand its promotional and support efforts this year on Instagram with original content, including several video clips. *Challenge* participants also have access to a wide selection of free support tools, such as an online personal profile and a customizable preparation plan at [quitchallenge.ca](http://quitchallenge.ca), encouragement emails, a Facebook community as well as the I QUIT NOW helpline (1-866-527-7383), quit smoking centres, the IQUITNOW.QC.CA website, and text message support offered by SMAT. And as a bonus, participants can win prizes, including \$5,000 in cash.

**Register at [quitchallenge.ca](http://quitchallenge.ca) before February 7, 2022.**

### **About the *Quit to Win! Challenge***

The *Quit to Win! Challenge* is a province-wide campaign that provides free support to smokers who want to quit through a collective challenge. Created in 2000 by Capsana, the *Challenge* is carried out in partnership with several public and private organizations, including the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux du Québec, Quebec’s Directions régionales de santé publique, the Canadian Cancer Society, and the Jean Coutu Group. To find out more, visit [quitchallenge.ca](http://quitchallenge.ca).

### **About Capsana**

Capsana is a social enterprise owned by the ÉPIC Foundation, which is associated with the Montreal Heart Institute, and by the Fondation PSI. Its mission is to help individuals take an active role in their health. To find out more, visit [capsana.ca](http://capsana.ca).

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