

Vulnerable Populations

Tobacco use is not an equal opportunity killer. Smoking disproportionately affects those most in need such as the poor, the homeless, racial minorities, LGBT persons and those suffering from mental illness and substance use disorders. While there have been declines in both youth and adult tobacco use in America, gaps in health equity persist. These trends are well documented, having been the subject of many policy statements, academic analyses, and the subject of the 1998 Surgeon General's report, *Tobacco Use among U.S. Racial/Ethnic Minority Groups*.

The facts are compelling. Americans with lower levels of education and income are significantly more likely to smoke than more affluent or educated Americans. Smoking prevalence is 50% higher among LGBT Americans compared with straight Americans. Those grappling with mental illness comprise nearly a third of all adult smokers. Even among populations who smoke *less* than the general population (such as African American adults), death and disease is greater than among the general population, partially due to lack of cessation resources and treatment options. Moreover, those groups most impacted by the tobacco epidemic have consistently been targets of marketing by the tobacco industry designed to hook them on their deadly product.

In addressing these disparate populations, CDC's Office on Smoking and Health and Division of Cancer Prevention and Control supports a consortium of national organizations to advance the prevention of commercial tobacco use and cancer among these groups. Each of these organizations focuses on a specific population as a "National Network." To learn more about these 8 national networks and the awardee organizations that support them, please click here [1].

To end the tobacco epidemic in America, *all* populations must be included in developing policies and practices designed to reduce tobacco use, increase cessation, and improve access to treatment for tobacco-related disease. Summary of key facts on prevalence, cessation, health effects, and marketing among demographic groups most severely impacted by the tobacco epidemic can be found via links to the left.

References [2]

Source: "Achieving Health Equity in Tobacco Control" [3]

About Us

Staff

News

Newsletter & Listserv Signup

Communiqué Newsletter

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Director's Corner

Events

Support Us

Partnerships & Collaborations

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UC Quits

Pfizer IGLC

SAMHSA

Behavioral Health

Curricula & Online Training

Fact Sheets & Reports

Presentations

Publications

Toolkits

Vulnerable Populations

Education Level

Homeless

Low Socioeconomic Status

LGBT

Race/Ethnicity

Resources

Campaigns & Initiatives

Curricula & Online Training

Fact Sheets & Reports

Infographics

Publications

Presentations

Toolkits

1-800-QUIT-NOW cards

Asian Smokers' Quitline

Videos

Webinars

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Webinar Archive

Ways to Quit

Medications

Online Resources

Social Support

Treatment Options

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Smoking Cessation Leadership Center
University of California, San Francisco

3333 California Street, Suite 430, San Francisco, CA 94143, Phone: (877) 509-3786
<https://smokingcessationleadership.ucsf.edu>

Source URL: <https://smokingcessationleadership.ucsf.edu/vulnerable-populations>

Links

[1] <https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/about/foa/national-networks-nofo/coop-agreement/index.html>

[2] <http://smokingcessationleadership.ucsf.edu/vulnerable-populations-references>

[3]

<http://smokingcessationleadership.ucsf.edu/sites/smokingcessationleadership.ucsf.edu/files/Documents/FactSheets/health-equity-v1.pdf>