

PACIFIC PEOPLES

TOBACCO CONTROL ACTION PLAN

The cover design is a traditional Tokelau and Tuvalu fan. The fan is a universal Pacific icon commonly used by all Pacific nations. It is made from natural fabric from the natural environment within the Pacific. The fan is richly woven and knitted together. This represents the Pacific community coming together to work collectively to produce a plan to address the health problems caused by tobacco use.

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PART ONE: Background

INTRODUCTION

The Pacific Peoples Tobacco Control Action Plan is a first step towards the development of a strategic plan for Pacific peoples' tobacco control. It identifies the priorities and steps that need to be taken to improve health outcomes for Pacific peoples to reach the goal of:

Improving Pacific peoples' wellness by reducing smoking-related morbidity and mortality.

The Pacific Peoples Tobacco Control Action Plan highlights six priority areas in which developments and improvements can be made to tobacco control services and initiatives for Pacific peoples. These priority action areas are:

- providing a Pacific voice for tobacco control issues
- health promotion
- workforce development
- co-ordination
- research and evaluation
- cessation.

Over 30 percent of Pacific peoples smoke tobacco.¹ As one in two continuing smokers will die early from smoking, this high smoking rate takes a terrible toll on Pacific peoples. Despite evidence that smoking is among the highest risk factors contributing to poor health among Pacific peoples, few initiatives exist to address this problem and, until recently, little research had been carried out to help develop an understanding of Pacific peoples' attitudes towards smoking.

The reduction of Pacific peoples' smoking prevalence rates is dependent on a comprehensive Pacific peoples' tobacco control programme being sustained and strengthened over a number of years. A comprehensive tobacco control programme includes encouraging smokefree lifestyles through health promotion, requiring smokefree environments, banning tobacco promotion and restricting access to tobacco through legislation, enforcement and taxation, providing smoking cessation services, and identifying gaps and monitoring progress through evaluation and research.



HISTORY

Pacific Tobacco Control Interim Group

The Pacific Peoples Tobacco Control Action Plan has been developed by the Pacific Tobacco Control Interim Group. It represents the views of a large number of people involved in Pacific peoples' tobacco control.

The Pacific Tobacco Control Interim Group consists of representatives from Smokefree Pacific Action Network (SPAN), Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, Ministry of Health, Apārangi Tautoko Auahi Kore (ATAK), Pacific Islands Heartbeat, the Health Sponsorship Council, The Quit Group, K'aute Pasifika, Hutt Valley DHB, Canterbury Community and Public Health, Wellington Smokefree Co-ordination Service, Capital and Coast DHB, Wellington Pacific Health Services, Wellington School of Medicine, and Marlborough Pacific Islands Community Trust.

Pacific Tobacco Control fono

Interim Group members were nominated by attendees of two fono held in Wellington and Auckland in May and June 2003. The fono were co-ordinated by Pacific Islands Heartbeat, the Health Sponsorship Council and The Quit Group. Attendees included health providers, researchers, community members and leaders involved in Pacific peoples' tobacco control. It was the first time that people from across New Zealand had gathered together to discuss Pacific peoples' tobacco control.

The aims of the fono were to:

- raise awareness of tobacco control issues in Pacific communities
- generate discussion, ideas and suggestions in relation to a Pacific peoples' tobacco control strategy
- develop a wide network of people interested in Pacific peoples' tobacco control issues.

The fono identified a number of key issues², such as:

- there is minimal funding available for Pacific peoples' tobacco control in New Zealand
- the need for Pacific peoples' tobacco control advocacy and co-ordination at a national level
- the need to have a dedicated Pacific peoples' tobacco control workforce
- the need to raise awareness about tobacco smoking and its impact on Pacific peoples' health.

A recommendation from the fono was that a Pacific Peoples Tobacco Control Action Plan be developed by the Interim Group to facilitate the actioning of the fono recommendations and discussions. This Action Plan is the result of several meetings of the Interim Group. The draft plan was circulated for comment throughout the Pacific community, including fono participants.

² TQG, 2003. *Health, Smoking and Cessation: Research Findings from Pacific Health Service Providers and Community Leader Fono Groups*. Wellington: The Quit Group.



CURRENT SITUATION

- One in three Pacific adults smoke, which equates to 76,000 Pacific smokers.
- One hundred and two die from ischaemic heart disease each year.
- Thirty die from lung cancer each year.
- Twenty-six die from stroke each year.
- An estimated three Pacific children die each year from SIDS as a result of exposure to adult smoking.
- Ten percent of Pacific males aged 14 to 15 years smoke daily.
- Seventeen percent of Pacific females aged 14 to 15 years smoke daily.³

Tobacco control is identified as a priority in the *New Zealand Health Strategy* but there are currently few tobacco control initiatives or programmes in place for Pacific peoples. Consequently, Pacific peoples' smoking rates have remained at over 30 percent of the Pacific population in New Zealand for the past ten to 15 years. Pacific men in the 25 to 45 age group have the highest rate of smoking, followed closely by Pacific women in the 20 to 24 age group.⁴

Statistics New Zealand predicts an increase in the Pacific population of nearly 60 percent by the year 2021 based on 2001 Census figures. Currently, Pacific peoples make up about six percent of the total New Zealand population. This figure will therefore rise to about nine percent. This increase signals the need for urgent action to address Pacific peoples' tobacco control needs.

Recent research carried out by The Quit Group⁵ identified the following issues:

- Pacific peoples view their personal health as important, however it is generally a lower priority than other obligations such as their role in the church and their extended family and work. This can result in health issues only being addressed when ill health means that other obligations or commitments can no longer be met.
- Motivation to live a smokefree lifestyle and the need to quit is low (and sometimes non-existent) on the agenda of Pacific peoples. Likewise health is generally low on the list of priorities.
- Although smoking takes place in the Islands, more Pacific peoples start smoking when they arrive in New Zealand. However, this trend may be changing as the price of tobacco increases in New Zealand and stricter tobacco control measures are implemented. Tobacco remains relatively low-cost in the Islands and there is little or no tobacco control activity.
- Smoking in the Islands was viewed by some at the fono as 'part of the culture'. Tobacco growing was common and smoking was (and probably still is) considered to keep people together.
- For Pacific peoples, it is common to smoke in settings such as church venues, family or Pacific events. Smoking is seen to be a normal part of social interaction at Pacific gatherings and in day-to-day living.

³ MoH, 1999. *Taking the Pulse. The 1996/97 New Zealand Health Survey*. Wellington: Ministry of Health.

⁴ SNZ, 1996. *1996 Census of Population and Dwellings*. Wellington: Statistics New Zealand.

⁵ TQG, 2003. *Health, Smoking and Cessation: Research Findings from Pacific Health Service Providers and Community Leader Fono Groups*. Wellington: The Quit Group.



- Gender differences in smoking patterns were highlighted – men are more likely to be seen smoking at Pacific and family events. However, this is changing fast and it is becoming more common to see just as many women smokers as men.
- There is an awareness about the effects of smoking among Pacific peoples, however, the message and the way it is currently presented is not felt to be relevant. Support for Pacific-specific general awareness campaigns about the dangers of smoking are needed, in addition to face-to-face or group initiatives developed by Pacific health providers.
- Pacific health providers are often smokers themselves and require help and support to quit. Many health providers are unable to provide or offer cessation help to clients for this reason. Not only do they feel hypocritical telling someone else to quit, but their smoking makes them ineligible to provide subsidised nicotine patches or gum to clients.
- Health promotion as a concept is not understood by some Pacific health workers and much of the focus is on the 'here and now', and cessation in particular. Collaboration in New Zealand among Pacific leaders and health professionals is needed to improve understanding of health promotion and to encourage the development and implementation of health promotion programmes and initiatives.

Tobacco control services for Pacific peoples

Tobacco control services for Pacific peoples are extremely limited. Those currently available include:

- the Quitline, which has a limited number of Samoan and Tokelauan-speaking Pacific advisors available to take calls from Pacific peoples. The Quitline is a freephone telephone service that offers quit smoking support and advice. Three percent of callers to the Quitline are Pacific peoples
- smoking cessation training courses. This is a national service offered by Pacific Islands Heartbeat which provides training and follow-up support for health providers (Pacific and mainstream) in smoking cessation and delivery of brief interventions such as the provision of nicotine patches and gum
- smoking awareness education programmes and smoking cessation resources in the community
- Smokefree Pacific Action Network (SPAN). SPAN is a voluntary Pacific network of health professionals established in November 2000 to promote and advocate for Pacific peoples' tobacco control issues. SPAN offers support through a co-ordinated approach including working at a community level with Pacific service providers and providing information to government on tobacco control issues concerning Pacific peoples. Action on Smoking and Health (ASH) has funding to support and assist SPAN
- four Pacific *Quit Cards* providers. The *Quit Cards* programme enables providers to distribute exchange cards for subsidised nicotine patches or gum
- K'aute Pasifika – Pacific cessation programme, providing brief intervention based in Hamilton
- newly appointed person to the Pacific position within the Alcohol, Tobacco and other Drugs Team, Hutt Valley, Regional Public Health.



RELATIONSHIP WITH KEY DOCUMENTS AND STRATEGIES

A number of related strategies exist that have a bearing on the Pacific Peoples Tobacco Control Action Plan. These include:

The Pacific Health and Disability Action Plan (February 2002)

This Action Plan is directed at the health and disability service sectors and Pacific communities, and aims to provide and promote affordable, effective and responsive health and disability services for all New Zealanders. It sets out the strategic direction and actions for improving health outcomes for Pacific peoples and reducing inequalities between Pacific and non-Pacific peoples.

Promoting healthy lifestyles is one of six priority areas listed in the document. The following tobacco control actions are specified:

- explore the development of Pacific Quitline and smoking cessation programmes
- encourage smokefree Pacific environments.

The New Zealand Health Strategy (December 2000)

This is the Government's overall framework for the health sector that aims to direct health services to areas that will ensure the greatest benefits for the overall population, but it especially focuses on inequalities in health.

Of the 13 population health objectives within the NZHS, four of the objectives have links with tobacco use to reduce smoking and the incidence and impact of cancer, cardiovascular disease and diabetes.

National Drug Policy Parts 1 and 2 (1998)

This is the national policy document that encompasses a range of strategies and interventions that form the basis for policy development across a wide range of settings and agencies. Two of the national priorities relevant to tobacco are:

- enabling New Zealanders to increase control over and improve their health by limiting the harms and hazards of tobacco and alcohol use
- reducing the prevalence of tobacco smoking and exposure to second-hand smoke.

The New Zealand Primary Health Care Strategy (February 2001)

This strategy places a greater emphasis on population health and the role of the community, health promotion and preventive care, and the need to involve professionals so as to reduce health inequalities between different groups.

It is particularly pertinent to Pacific health providers who are working in the cessation and health promotion fields, for example, general practitioners, primary health organisations, and public health services.



The New Zealand Cancer Control Strategy (March 2003)

The Cancer Control Strategy is the framework for the development and implementation of a comprehensive and co-ordinated programme to control cancer in New Zealand. One of its goals is to reduce the incidence of cancer through primary prevention.

Other relevant documents:

- A Tobacco Control Research Strategy for New Zealand
- Cardiovascular Guideline and Pacific Action Plan
- Child Health Strategy
- Clearing the Smoke, a five-year plan for tobacco control in New Zealand (2003-2007), draft discussion document
- District Health Board Strategic Plans
- Guidelines on Pacific Health Research
- National Health Committee Report 2000
- National Māori Tobacco Control Strategy 2003-2007
- Regional Public Health National Strategic Plan
- Toward a Tobacco-Free Aotearoa: A Five-Year Plan for HFA Funding for Māori Tobacco Control (1999-2003)
- Toward a Tobacco-Free New Zealand: A Five-Year Plan for HFA Funding for Tobacco Control (1999-2003).



PART TWO: Action Plan

A PACIFIC VOICE FOR TOBACCO CONTROL

Pacific peoples have high smoking rates in comparison to European New Zealanders. Despite this, there are currently very few tobacco control programmes or initiatives that aim to reduce Pacific peoples' smoking prevalence. There is a need for a Pacific voice for tobacco control – to highlight the areas of need to key stakeholders, co-ordinate the workforce and mobilise the Pacific community through awareness of the health-related issues around tobacco consumption.

Goal: Establishing a process/mechanism for highlighting Pacific peoples' tobacco control issues.

Key tasks

- Promoting the need for co-ordination.
- Promoting Pacific peoples' tobacco control issues likely to impact on their smoking rates to key stakeholders, for example, tobacco taxation, tobacco industry activity, legislation, stronger health warnings on tobacco packs.
- Encouraging the implementation of the Action Plan.

Actions

- Appoint spokesperson who can promote and champion Pacific peoples' tobacco control issues.
- Promote the co-ordination of Pacific peoples' tobacco control services.
- Distribute tobacco control information to Pacific health workers.
- Encourage Pacific communities to highlight their tobacco control issues.
- Consult with the Pacific peoples' tobacco control community to identify and prioritise key issues.
- Encourage the provision of further Pacific peoples' tobacco control programmes.
- Co-ordinate the development of a national Pacific peoples' tobacco control strategy.
- Begin the implementation of the Action Plan.



HEALTH PROMOTION

Health promotion aims to mobilise Pacific peoples to develop responses to their own needs from within their own contexts. The approach to health promotion is guided by the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi (participation, partnership and active protection) and strategies set out by the Ottawa Charter.

Goal: Raise awareness of tobacco control issues and promote the adoption of smokefree lifestyles and communities.

Key tasks

- Raise awareness of the health effects of tobacco use.
- Promote the benefits of smokefree environments.
- Work towards the prevention of the uptake of smoking in youth.

Actions

- Promote the development of tobacco control awareness programmes, media campaigns, resources, messages and communication strategies.
- Encourage, support and promote smokefree Pacific environments.
- Encourage, support and promote the delivery of effective smoking prevention messages to Pacific youth.



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

A well-trained and skilled workforce is essential if excellence in planning, development and service delivery to Pacific peoples is to be provided. A skilled tobacco control workforce will be responsive to the immediate and long-term tobacco control needs of Pacific peoples.

Goal: To develop a professional, multi-skilled and culturally competent Pacific peoples' tobacco control workforce.

Key tasks

- Strengthen and support the existing dedicated Pacific peoples' tobacco control workforce.
- Increase and support the capacity and capability of the Pacific peoples' tobacco control workforce.
- Up-skill Pacific health workers in tobacco control issues.
- Increase responsiveness of non-Pacific tobacco control workers in Pacific peoples tobacco control issues.
- Promote tobacco control to Pacific health workers as a career path opportunity.

Actions

- Encourage, support and promote the recruitment, training, support and retention of a Pacific peoples' tobacco control workforce in all areas (cessation, health promotion, research, policy development, co-ordination, promotion of Pacific peoples' tobacco control issues etc).
- Promote the further development of Pacific-specific training in tobacco control issues including health promotion concepts and practices, cessation, research and evaluation.
- Facilitate opportunities to raise the profile of Pacific peoples' tobacco control issues nationally.
- Support and promote the increase of funding for Pacific peoples' tobacco control workforce development (eg, scholarships, research grants, attendance at conferences etc).
- Hold regular fono for Pacific health workers with an involvement in tobacco control.



CO-ORDINATION (PEOPLE, SERVICES, RESOURCES, TRAINING)

Co-ordination of services will provide increased support for existing and future Pacific peoples' tobacco control workers, encouraging the sharing of experiences and information, maximising resources and reducing duplication. To empower tobacco control workers, as a group, to have a strong voice for Pacific peoples' tobacco control.

Goal: To improve and increase co-ordination and collaboration within Pacific peoples' tobacco control.

Key tasks

- Support, increase and strengthen networking opportunities.
- Facilitate the flow of information among Pacific health workers.
- Develop a communication structure that links to existing tobacco control structures.
- Identify and address existing gaps in communication and collaboration within Pacific peoples' tobacco control.
- Develop relationships with international Pacific peoples' tobacco control networks.

Actions

- Develop a database of Pacific workers, researchers, skills and services.
- Develop a national co-ordination plan for Pacific health provider services.
- Link with existing tobacco control networks within New Zealand and the Pacific region and establish and strengthen collaboration between Pacific providers and other tobacco control providers.
- Provide networking opportunities for the Pacific peoples' tobacco control workforce (fono – local, national and international).



RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

There is a significant lack of Pacific-specific research in tobacco control internationally. There is a need to ensure that tobacco control services for Pacific peoples are informed by accurate and useful data, including evaluation of programmes and initiatives. Pacific-specific tobacco control information and research findings should be timely, relevant and reliable.

Goal: Improve quality and effectiveness of Pacific-focused tobacco control interventions through research and evidence-based initiatives.

Key Tasks

- Promote, support and encourage the undertaking of further research to inform Pacific peoples' tobacco control programmes.
- Develop, support and encourage Pacific research capacity in tobacco control.
- Provide training and development opportunities for Pacific peoples' tobacco control researchers.
- Identify research priorities for Pacific peoples' tobacco control research (eg, Why do Pacific peoples smoke?).

Actions

- Undertake a stocktake of Pacific research and researchers (national and international).
- Carry out a needs analysis of Pacific peoples' tobacco control research.
- Provide training on how to access research funding.
- Link with the *Tobacco Control Research Strategy for New Zealand* and the guidelines of Pacific health researchers.
- Promote research and evaluation of existing Pacific peoples' tobacco control initiatives to identify what is effective and inform the development of new initiatives.



CESSATION

There are a number of smoking cessation services available in New Zealand but very few have Pacific peoples' as a priority group. To be effective, cessation services must be appropriate to Pacific peoples and receive adequate funding.

Goal: To support Pacific smokers to quit smoking.

Key tasks

- Raise awareness of smoking cessation.
- Raise awareness of the benefits of quitting smoking.
- Promote the need to increase the Pacific cessation workforce.
- Promote the need for research to inform and evaluate Pacific cessation programmes.

Actions

- Promote the development and provision of Pacific quit media campaigns.
- Promote the development and provision of comprehensive, sustainable and practical Pacific cessation services.
- Encourage and support the development of Pacific specific cessation resources and messages.
- Encourage and support Pacific health workers who smoke to quit smoking.
- Develop, support and strengthen existing Pacific providers to promote cessation programmes.
- Promote existing cessation services to Pacific peoples.



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