

## **African Americans Bear a Disproportionate Share of the Cost of Smoking in California**

### **African Americans smoke at higher rates than other racial/ethnic groups in California**

- 19.3 percent of African American adults, compared to 13.1 percent of Hispanic adults and 16.1 percent of all other adults currently smoke cigarettes
- Smoking is highly prevalent among both African American men and women. 21.4 percent of African American men and 17.3 percent of African American women currently smoke

### **Smoking-attributable healthcare expenditures among African Americans are substantial**

- Smoking-attributable healthcare expenditures amount to \$400 for every African American adult in California
- Smoking-attributable healthcare expenditures amount to \$2,192 for every African American adult smoker in the state

### **Smoking-attributable mortality among African Americans from cardiovascular disease, cancer, and respiratory disease is high**

- While African Americans comprise 6.2 percent of the population of California, they account for 7.6% (3,013) of the smoking-attributable deaths in the state
- African Americans lose more years of life per death (16.3 years) than Hispanics (14.6 years) and all others (12.0 years) due to smoking-attributable causes
- African Americans suffer greater productivity losses (\$260,000) than other groups due to smoking-attributable deaths

### **Smoking imposes a great economic burden on the African American community in California**

- They incur 10 percent of all smoking-attributable costs (\$1.4 billion), including 8 percent of smoking-attributable healthcare expenditures (\$629 million); and 13 percent of smoking-attributable mortality costs (\$784 million)
- Healthcare and mortality costs amount to \$898 for each African American adult and \$4,922 for each African American adult smoker in California
- While the tobacco industry has sponsored scholarships, sports events, and other activities specifically for African Americans\*, the community should carefully consider these benefits in light of the economic burden that results from smoking

Note: All data are for 2002

\* King G, Gebrasselassie T, Mallett RK, Kozlowski L, Bendel RB. Opinions of African Americans about tobacco industry philanthropy. Preventive Medicine Article in press, available online July 31 2007.  
[http://www.sciencedirect/science?\\_ob=ArticleURL&\\_udi](http://www.sciencedirect/science?_ob=ArticleURL&_udi)

Source: Wendy Max, Hai-Yen Sung, and Lue-Yen Tucker, Institute for Health & Aging, University of California, San Francisco. Unpublished findings from *The Disproportionate Cost of Smoking for Communities of Color*, a research project funded by the California Tobacco-Related Disease Research Program (Grant # 13RT-0030).  
Email contact: [wendy.max@ucsf.edu](mailto:wendy.max@ucsf.edu).