

The Economic Impact of Smoking on the Hispanic Community in California is Large Despite Low Smoking Prevalence

A large number of Hispanics adults in California smoke

- Hispanic smokers make up 25 % of all adult California smokers (nearly one million)
- Hispanic smokers are overwhelmingly male; 18.7 percent of Hispanic men are current smokers while only 7.2 percent of Hispanic women smoke
- The numbers don't tell the whole story; some subgroups in the community are known to smoke at much higher rates and would have much higher costs than average

Hispanic Californians spent \$666 million on healthcare (2002) due to smoking-attributable diseases

- Over \$300,000 is spent on hospital care and nearly \$200,000 is spent for physician and other outpatient care
- Smoking-attributable healthcare expenditures amount to over \$726 for every Hispanic adult smoker in the state

Over 3000 Hispanic Californians die a year from smoking-attributable cardiovascular disease, cancer, and respiratory disease

- Smoking led to the deaths of 1,455 Hispanics from cardiovascular disease, 968 from cancer, and 581 from respiratory disease
- Hispanic Californians lose more years of life (14.6) from each smoking-attributable death than all other ethnic/racial groups except African Americans
- Hispanic Californians suffer greater productivity losses per death (\$237,000) from smoking-attributable deaths than all other groups in the state except African Americans

There is a vast economic impact due the size of California's Hispanic community, although smoking prevalence is relatively low among Hispanic adults (13.1%)

- Total smoking-attributable healthcare and mortality costs for Hispanic Californians was nearly \$1.4 billion in 2002, representing \$1,500 for every adult Hispanic smoker
- High mortality costs per death and high number of years of potential life lost plague the Hispanic community because they commonly die from smoking-attributable diseases at young ages

Targeted tobacco control programs are needed for specific subgroups within the Hispanic community

- Programs should focus on helping Hispanic men to quit smoking
- Programs for Hispanic women should focus on maintaining their low rate of smoking prevalence
- Programs need to be culturally tailored for specific Hispanic subpopulations with higher smoking prevalence

Note: All data are for 2002

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