

Predictors of wanting to quit in a national sample of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander smokers

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Abstract

OBJECTIVE: To describe factors that predict wanting to quit smoking in a national sample of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

DESIGN, SETTING AND PARTICIPANTS:

The Talking About The Smokes (TATS) project used a quota sampling design to recruit participants from communities served by 34 Aboriginal community-controlled health services and one community in the Torres Strait. Baseline survey data were collected from 1643 current smokers between April 2012 and October 2013.

MAIN OUTCOME MEASURE: Wanting to quit smoking.

RESULTS: More than two-thirds of smokers (70%) said they want to quit. Many factors were associated with wanting to quit, including past quitting activity. Interest in quitting was lower among men and smokers from economically disadvantaged areas, but there was no difference by age, remoteness or other measures of economic disadvantage. Attitudes and beliefs negatively associated with wanting to quit included enjoying smoking and believing quitting to be very difficult, and those positively associated included regretting ever starting to smoke, perceiving that local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community leaders disapprove of smoking, believing non-smokers set a good example to children, worrying about future smoking-related health effects and believing quitting to be beneficial. Reporting support from family and friends was predictive of wanting to quit, but factors related to smoking in the social network were not. Associations with health and wellbeing were mixed. While most tobacco control policy exposure variables were positively associated with wanting to quit, two - receiving advice to quit from a health professional, and recall of targeted anti-tobacco advertising - appeared to have an effect that extended beyond influencing relevant attitudes and beliefs.

CONCLUSION: Interest in quitting among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander smokers appears to be influenced by a broad range of factors, highlighting the importance of taking a comprehensive approach to tobacco control. Advice from health professionals and targeted advertising appear to be important intervention strategies.

Recommended Citation

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