Developing the Public Attitudes about Alcohol Misuse and Sobriety among Alaska Native People Survey

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65,000 voices

Alaska Native People Shaping Health Care

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Objectives

- Provide background on alcohol research and community engagement at Southcentral Foundation
- Discuss cognitive interview approach to engaging customer-owners in survey development
- Share how cognitive interview feedback from customer-owners has been used to adapt a survey on perceptions of alcohol misuse and sobriety among Alaska Native people
Vision
A Native Community that enjoys physical, mental, emotional and spiritual wellness

Mission
Working together with the Native Community to achieve wellness through health and related services
Operational Principles

**Relationships** between customer-owner, family and provider must be fostered and supported

**Emphasis** on wellness of the whole person, family and community (physical, mental, emotional and spiritual wellness)

**Locations** convenient for customer-owners with minimal stops to get all their needs addressed

**Access** optimized and waiting times limited

**Together** with the customer-owner as an active partner

**Intentional** whole-system design to maximize coordination and minimize duplication

**Outcome** and process measures continuously evaluated and improved

**Not** complicated but simple and easy to use

**Services** financially sustainable and viable

**Hub** of the system is the family

**Interests** of customer-owners drive the system to determine what we do and how we do it

**Population-Based** systems and services

**Services** and systems build on the strengths of Alaska Native cultures
Key Principles of CBPR

- Recognize community as unit of identity
- Builds on strengths and resources within the community
- Facilitates collaborative partnerships in all phases of the research
- Integrates knowledge and action for mutual benefit of all partners
- Promotes a co-learning and empowering process that attends to social inequality
- Involves a cyclical and iterative process
- Addresses health from both positive and ecological perspectives
- Disseminates findings and knowledge gained to all partners
Prior SCF Research

- 1999 – Ownership and management of all primary care
- 2006 - Research Department created
- 2006 - Specimen Banking Study funded
- 2009 - Northwest Alaska Pharmacogenomics Research Network begins
- 2012 - Southcentral Foundation Center for Alaska Native Health Research
The Perceptions of Alcohol Misuse and Sobriety among Alaska Native People Research Study
Study Background

- Higher rates of alcohol use AND higher rates of abstinence\(^1\)
- Few intervention studies\(^2,3\)
- People Awakening—rural communities, prevention focused\(^4\)
- Culturally congruent, alcohol-related services high priority
- Knowledge needed to guide health services and programs, as well as addiction and intervention sciences
Specific aims

Aim 1
Describe explanatory models of alcohol misuse and sobriety among Alaska Native people and other key stakeholders (providers and leaders) in a tribal health system.

Aim 2
Examine the acceptability and perceived utility of different treatment strategies to reduce alcohol misuse and encourage sobriety.
### Methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Participants (n)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-depth, semi-structured interviews</td>
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<td>Focus Groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cognitive Interviews (pre-pilot)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pilot Survey</td>
<td>200</td>
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<td>Cognitive Interviews (during pilot)</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Survey</td>
<td>850 (data collection to begin in 2018)</td>
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</table>
Survey Adaptation Phase 1

- Data from interviews, focus groups and study team expertise used to adapt Public Attitudes About Addiction Survey\(^5\)
  - Adapted addiction items to focus on alcohol dependence and misuse
  - Created new items to focus on sobriety
Cognitive interview
- Qualitative method used to collect feedback on:
  - Comprehension
  - Clarity
  - Inappropriate & Offensive
- 9 Pre-pilot survey cognitive interviews completed

### Public Attitudes about Alcohol Misuse and Sobriety among Alaska Native and American Indian People

<table>
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<th>Instruction</th>
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Phase 2 Results - Problems with Meaning and Language

Problems w/ Meaning

• Alcohol expressions lacked clarity
• Potential lack of knowledge about SCF alcohol treatment services
• Broaden “intergenerational trauma” to “trauma”
• Preference for spirituality over religion
• Younger people may not have been exposed to cultural traditions
• Not all people need traditional culture for recovery/sobriety

Language Problems

• Participants were okay answering questions for self but not others
• Answers depend on the person or community
• Don’t want to judge others
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expression</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Quote</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Risk of alcohol misuse</td>
<td>-Getting drunk enough to get addicted or dependent on it, using it too much or too frequently, being too self-indulgent. (CI04)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Alcohol misuse</td>
<td>-Over-drinking, drinking too much or too long, or at all (for some). (CI05)</td>
<td>...abusing, overdoing it, using it for what it’s not...for... getting drunk...</td>
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<tr>
<td>Binge drinking</td>
<td>-Drinking a lot for days on end. (CI05)</td>
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<td>Alcohol abuse</td>
<td>-Less acute than dependence. (CI03, CI04)</td>
<td>Whenever I hear the word alcohol abuse, I think they are starting to have a problem...</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alcohol addiction</td>
<td>-Will do anything to get a drink; need to have it to function.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Has a hard time controlling urge for alcohol. (CI05)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alcohol dependence</td>
<td>-Unable to control drinking; will do anything to stay intoxicated. (CI01)</td>
<td>...when you need it all the time...to get rid of the shakes, DT’s, feel normal....[or] you could just be in your head, ‘I need it’.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Not as extreme as alcoholic (CI02)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-More acute addiction (CI03, CI04)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Body needs it to function. (CI03)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Alcoholic/Alcoholism</td>
<td>-A disease with no cure. (CI02)</td>
<td>...pathological in body and mind, feelings and spirit becomes very sick. Going to take a spiritual answer to come out of it...</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Unable to function normally</td>
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Survey Adaptation Phase 3

- Survey adapted using Phase 2 cognitive interview feedback & piloted with 200 customer-owners
- 13 cognitive interviews completed for customer-owner engagement
- Collected feedback on:
  - Content
  - Usability
  - Tone

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Phase 3 Results - Content

Content—A few suggested changes and additions

- Change ‘get and stay sober’ to ‘quit drinking’ (all sobriety Qs)
- Ask about views of the role of Alaska Native practices in sobriety (Q46)
- Change ‘culturally tailored treatment’ to ‘treatments for alcohol that use Alaska Native and American Indian cultures’ (Q62)
- Add ‘Drinking alcohol in small amounts every day is not always harmful for a person recovering from alcohol dependence’ (Q15)
- Change ‘Being depressed can lead a person to depend on alcohol’ from ‘Being depressed can lead to alcohol dependence’ (Q26)
Phase 3 Results – Usability

Some Unclear Terms

- 'hold your liquor'
- 'alcohol dependence'
- 'big problems with alcohol'
- 'worthwhile'
- 'partying'
- 'behave well'
Phase 3 Results – Tone

- Overall not perceived as insensitive or offensive with a few issues.

  “...they might think that the question is prejudice, insinuating that northern people have alcohol problems”

  “People who use substances...might feel judged”

  “When it says genes that sounds, I don’t know. I don’t know about genes, it’s just people”

  “So the implications are that people are out of their minds if they are alcoholics?”

- Some questions could stigmatize people
- Respondents might think they are “not strong” if they use medications for treatment
- Some terms (i.e. genes) too impersonal
Next Steps

- Adapt survey with regard for Phase 3 cognitive interview feedback and confirmatory and exploratory factor analyses from pilot survey
- Final survey analyses
- Dissemination
  - Manuscripts
  - Anchorage Native News
  - Presentations at SCF staff meetings
References cited


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Questions?
For More Information

907-729-6325

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https://www.southcentralfoundation.com/services/research/
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