HIGH TOBACCO USE PREVALENCE WITH SIGNIFICANT REGIONAL AND SEX DIFFERENCES IN SMOKELESS TOBACCO USE AMONG WESTERN ALASKA NATIVE PEOPLE:

THE WATCH STUDY

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OBJECTIVES:

- Describe differences in tobacco use prevalence, including smokeless tobacco use, in the Norton Sound and Yukon-Kuskokwim regions
- Explain public health reasons for knowing and understanding these differences at the regional level
Western Alaska Tribal Collaborative for Health (WATCH)

- Combined 3 cohort studies done during 2000-2010 into ONE dataset:
  - CANHR (UAF in YK region)
  - EARTH (ANTHC in Y-K region)
  - GOCADAN (MedStar in Norton Sound)
- Total “n” (number of participants with data) who provided self-reported information on tobacco use = 3,932
BACKGROUND (CONT’D)

• WATCH Purpose:
  • Determine chronic disease incidence
    • Diabetes
    • Heart Disease
    • Stroke
  • Examine risk factors
    • Hypertension
    • Obesity
    • \textit{Tobacco Use}
SIGNIFICANCE

• Alaska: smoking and ST use more prevalent than general U.S. population

• Smoking and ST use more prevalent in AN people than the general Alaska population

• Multiple tobacco product use is growing concern in U.S. and globally
  • Increasingly common, especially among youth
  • Associated with lower cessation rates
  • Most cessation programs only address smoking
  • Little known about other tobacco types – prevalence, health consequences, cessation methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tobacco Type</th>
<th>U.S Population</th>
<th>Alaska Statewide</th>
<th>AN People</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Smoking</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST Use</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TOBACCO USE DEFINITIONS

SMOKERS:

• **Ever-smoker**: Smoked at least 100 cigarettes in a lifetime

• **Current smoker**: No quit date or age reported OR quit date within 1 year of study enrollment

• **Former smoker**: Quit 1 year or more before study enrollment

ST USERS:

• **Ever ST user**: Any use of commercial or homemade smokeless tobacco product

Y-K region only:

• **Commercial ST user**: Any use of store-bought ST products

• **Iqmik user**: Any use of homemade ST products combining dried or cured tobacco leaves with tree ash
87% WATCH SAMPLE REPORTED TOBACCO USE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tobacco Use in Norton Sound</th>
<th>Tobacco Use in Y-K</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>98% Ever Smokers</strong></td>
<td><strong>71% Ever Smokers</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>76% Current Smokers</strong></td>
<td><strong>51% Current Smokers</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Similar in men &amp; women</td>
<td>More men than women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>24% Former Smokers</strong></td>
<td><strong>49% Former Smokers</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Similar in men &amp; women</td>
<td>More women than men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9% Ever ST Users</strong></td>
<td><strong>76% Ever ST Users</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14% Men</td>
<td><strong>69% Men</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4% Women</td>
<td><strong>84% Women</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6% Ever Smoked &amp; Used ST</strong></td>
<td><strong>47% Ever Smoked &amp; Used ST</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10% Men</td>
<td><strong>51% Men</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3% Women</td>
<td><strong>41% Women</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FIRST PRODUCT USED

AMONG 701 DUAL- AND MULTI-PRODUCT TOBACCO USERS IN Y-K

Cigarettes and Iqmik (n=303)
• Most started with Iqmik – 56% of men and 70% of women
• 13% of men and 20% of women reported simultaneous initiation

Cigarettes and Commercial ST (n=150)
• Most started with Commercial ST – 57% of men and 68% of women
• 9% of men and 17% of women reported simultaneous initiation

Iqmik and Commercial ST (n=248)
• Most started with Commercial ST – 59% of men and 49% of women
• 36% of men and 45% of women reported starting both products simultaneously

Cigarettes, Iqmik, and Commercial ST (n=270)
• 39% men and women reported starting all 3 products simultaneously
• 27% started with Commercial ST, 22% started with cigarettes, 12% started with Iqmik
CONCURRENT USE (VS. SEQUENTIAL USE)

AMONG 722 DUAL-PRODUCT USERS & 271 MULTI-PRODUCT USERS IN Y-K
SUMMARY

• Western Alaska – Tobacco use more than DOUBLE the use among general U.S. and Alaska

• Norton Sound tobacco use
  • Driven primarily by cigarette smoking (98% of tobacco use in Norton Sound)
  • Most reported current use (76%); only 24% reported to be former users
  • Similar proportions of men and women continue to smoke

• Y-K tobacco use
  • Driven by ST use in both men and women (76% ST and 71% cigarettes)
  • Half of cigarette smokers reported they had quit smoking
  • High prevalence of dual- and multi-product use among both men and women
PUBLIC HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Prevention efforts, cessation programs, and public health messaging must resonate with each community members and their tobacco use patterns.

Our findings show:

- Norton Sound would benefit from more effective prevention and cessation efforts aimed at smoking in both men and women
- Y-K would benefit from prevention and cessation interventions aimed smokeless tobacco use, especially among women, as well as dual- and multi-product use

Research gaps:

- Exploration into the content and harms of smokeless tobacco use, including iqmik
- Evidence-based best practices for dual- and multi-product use prevention and cessation
THANK YOU!

- **Questions?**
- **Acknowledgements**
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