Asian Communities’ Capacities in Tobacco Control: Issues and Policy Implications

Surendra Bir Adhikari, Ph.D.

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Goal: Enhanced understanding of:

- (a) socio-cultural acceptance of tobacco and tobacco use disparities among Asian Americans;

- (b) major barriers in tobacco use prevention and cessation efforts and ways to resolve these in a culturally sensitive manner; and

- (c) communities’ capacity building in tobacco control as makes sense to the diverse Asian communities.
Culture of Tobacco Use

- Lack of baseline data on Asian American tobacco use.
- High social acceptance of and disparities in tobacco use.
- Targeted marketing by the tobacco industry.
- Lack culturally/linguistically tailored programs.
- Limited Impact of mainstream tobacco control programs for these communities.
- High tobacco use among Asian men; growing use among girls and women.
- Asian smokers less likely to receive physician counseling to quit smoking [Commonwealth Fund 2001]

[Source: Lew and Tanjasri 2003; Adhikari 2002; unless specified otherwise]
Tobacco Use & Health Disparities

Culture of Tobacco Use and Health Disparities:
Policy Interventions Schema

- Disparities in Tobacco Use
- Aggressive Tobacco Industry Targetting
- Cultural and Linguistic Barriers
- Community Need Assessment
- Community Capacity Building [Coalitions, advocacy efforts]
- Culturally Appropriate Community Programs
- Steps Toward Cultural Competence [CCCH]
- Low Health Care Utilization
- Social Acceptance of Tobacco Use
- Low Capacity to Fight Tobacco Use
- Uninsured & Wide Ethnic Differences [Brown et al. 2000]
- Cultural Festivals and Events as Education
- Minority Communities Working Together [Oishi 2003]
- Building Leadership Capacity
- Establishing Trust with Communities [NIH/NHLBI]

Challenge and Solutions

• **Challenge**: Of outreaching the diverse Asian communities (distrust; self-supporting).

• **Solution 1**: Community based need assessment & prevalence studies (surveys in multiple languages).

• **Solution 2**: Capacity building: resource networking with mainstream agencies; engaging community leaders.

• **Solution 3**: Tobacco use and cessation efforts require the involvement of a broader cross-section of ethnic communities and resource providers.
Interventions to Change Social Norm

• **Challenge:** Understanding: social acceptance of tobacco use in Asian communities, low capacity to respond to tobacco use (APPEAL), and aggressive AAPI targeting.

• **Solution 1:** Need assessment and community based prevalence studies for a better understanding of the prevalent social norm and the impact of tobacco.

• **Solution 2:** Building communities’ capacities and confidence in tobacco use prevention and control through coalitions, advocacy and empowerment.

• **Solution 3:** Support to cultural festivals and events (New Year; Health Fairs; Annual Party) and gaining trust.
Trascending Cultural Barriers

- **Challenge**: Engagement (cultural/linguistic barriers).

- **Solution 1**: Development/distribution of relevant literature in multiple Asian languages.

- **Solution 2**: Enabling culturally competent program to comprehensively address tobacco use [TUPCF strategic goal to reduce tobacco use among minority populations mirrors this need].

- **Solution 3**: Support to cultural festivals and events (New Year; Health Fairs); relating tobacco issues to their concerns (APPEAL).
To Wrap it Up…..

- Community programming mobilizing cultural heritage and health screening events to engage increased number of diverse Asian communities for enhanced capacities.
- Culturally sensitive programming to change the social norm and address higher social acceptance of smoking among select Asian communities (particularly males).
- Culturally competent programming to enhance help seeking behavior by being sensitive to folk/traditional as well as modern medicine (“medical pluralism”), that acknowledges cultural, religious, and ethnic diversity.
Health Fair and Tobacco Prevention
Community Capacity Building

Engaging Teens Early...

Smoking can lead to these effects:

- Brain Damage
- Tooth Decay
- Lung Cancer
- Death

So people who smoke and people who don't smoke just don't smoke!

Don't even try smoke!
Capacity Building... Youth Advocacy
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APPEAL and Youth Advocacy
Selected Resources & Websites

• www.aapcho.org

• Asian Pacific Partners for Empowerment and Leadership (APPEAL) www.appealforcommunities.org publications:
  * A Policy Framework for Preventing and Reducing Tobacco Use in the Asian American and Pacific Islander Community.
  * Critical Research and Data Issues on Tobacco Use, Prevention and Control for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.
  * Making Tobacco Relevant for Asian American and Pacific Islander Communities.
  * Achieving Parity through Tobacco Control for all communities.
  * Integrating Evaluation into Tobacco Programs for Asian American and Pacific Islander Communities.
  * Conducting Needs Assessments for Tobacco Control in Asian American and Pacific Islander Communities.
  * Enhancing Cultural and Community Competence for Tobacco Control for Asian American and Pacific Islanders.
