

Contexts of Tobacco Use and Perspectives on Smoking Cessation Among a Sample of Urban American Indians

American Indians have the highest prevalence of cigarette use in the United States, but there is a shortage of knowledge about American Indians' own perspectives on smoking and cessation. The purpose of this exploratory qualitative study was to obtain information on American Indians' views that would be useful for subsequent intervention planning and development. Four focus groups were conducted with urban American Indians living in Maryland to explore the sociocultural contexts of tobacco use and their perspectives on various mainstream and culturally-specific smoking cessation strategies and service delivery models. Tobacco interventions targeting American Indians should increase service access, address negative experiences with medications, emphasize empowerment for behavior change, explicitly distinguish ceremonial tobacco from cigarette use, and use culturally-relevant messages. Smoking cessation programs and health promotion efforts may be perceived as more relevant by the target population if they incorporate an understanding of the social and cultural facets of smoking behavior.