

Other Conference Stream:

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Project:

Title: Exploring Indigenous Experiences of Smoking and the Implications for Tobacco Control
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Abstract:

Background/Context:

Smoking rates among Indigenous populations across North America, New Zealand, and Australia often exceed the rates in non-Indigenous populations in the same regions. Due to higher numbers of smokers and health inequities such as decreased access to healthcare services and systemic racism, Indigenous groups have been identified as a high priority population in tobacco control. Addressing these persistent health inequities necessitates exploring the meaning of smoking to Indigenous populations, why individuals initiate smoking, and smoking in the context of Indigenous lives. This understanding can foster humility and awareness in those who develop and deliver tobacco control strategies.

Objectives:

This study explores characteristics and meanings of smoking for Indigenous groups living in Canada, the United States, New Zealand, and Australia as captured in literature.

Methods:

A scoping review of peer-reviewed literature and Indigenous narratives is in progress using Arksey and O'Malley's (2005) five stages and an Indigenous consultation stage. Data were extracted and charted using a descriptive analytical framework, counted, and thematically analyzed.

Results:

Preliminary results suggest that the subjective experiences of smoking for some Indigenous people are connected to self-identity, history, kinship, and family practices. Smoking involves communal exchange and consumption, and is important for social cohesion in Indigenous communities. It provides meaning, purpose, and structure for Indigenous people; however, smoking is also associated with stress, discrimination, and colonization.

Conclusions:

The unique significance of and attitudes towards smoking must be considered in tobacco control efforts with Indigenous communities. Policy, programming, and strategy development must involve Indigenous peoples and positively interact with and support local Indigenous beliefs and knowledge.