

HEALTH AND MEDICINE



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➔ Original Study (http://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2015/14_0408.htm)

Posted by [Donna Parker-UNC](http://www.futurity.org/author/donna-parker/) (<http://www.futurity.org/author/donna-parker/>) on March 3, 2015

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A recent study reports patients' perspectives on being a smoker and trying to quit.

It's one of the first efforts to ask seemingly simple but

important questions, such as:

- “What do patients who smoke want and need from their physicians?”
- “What is it like to be someone who smokes in today’s increasingly smoke-free world?”
- “How can providers best interact with their patients who smoke and support their efforts to become tobacco-free?”

The study reports results from a series of focus groups in which 33 participants—current or recently quit smokers—explored personal experiences with and ideas about smoking and smoking cessation.

Several themes emerged from focus group participant feedback. “Tobacco users often reported feeling shame, isolation, or disrespect,” says study leader Jacqueline Halladay, associate professor of family medicine at University of North Carolina (UNC).

“Most importantly, patients want to know that their physicians understand the experience of being a smoker.”

ACKNOWLEDGE THE CHALLENGES

“Doctors also need to know that patients who smoke want and need to be treated with great respect,” says coauthor Adam Goldstein, professor of family medicine and head of the Tobacco Interventions Programs at UNC.

The patients recommended that clinical care teams acknowledge the great challenges that smokers face today, that they embed their care approach within the addiction model, and really help them with quitting.

“Patients who smoke want their doctors to not only talk with them about smoking at every visit, but they also want specific advice, positive encouragement

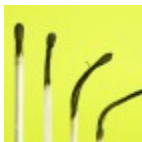
Smokers want more respect from doctors - Futurity <http://www.futurity.org/smokers-quitting-doctors-867122/>
and assistance, including medications,” says
Halladay.

Focus group participants also discussed ideas to provide high value resources on a community level including telephone quitlines or comprehensive cessation specialists; assistance with connecting patients with those best suited to their unique situations; and checking in with patients along the way to offer support and redirection if needed.

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Finally, participants suggested new or enhanced ways of measuring tobacco cessation outcomes. Quality of life measures such as improved activity and energy levels, a sense of freedom in not having to plan around smoke breaks, and a sense of pride in achieving a goal of becoming smoke free were all suggestions for creative, patient-centered measures that providers could incorporate to improve future cessation efforts.

“We need to measure outcomes that matter to patients” including respect, encouragement, support, empowerment, and not being judged,” says Goldstein.

Ultimately, the research team hopes the results of this study will encourage others “to engage in testing new patient-centered interventions, outcomes, and dissemination strategies to help smokers achieve tobacco-free lives.”

The findings appear in the journal *Preventing Chronic*

Smokers want more respect from doctors - Futurity <http://www.futurity.org/smokers-quitting-doctors-867122/Disease> (http://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2015/14_0408.htm). Health-e-NC, an initiative of the University Cancer Research Fund at the university, supported the work.

Source: UNC-Chapel Hill (<http://www.med.unc.edu/fammed/news/patients-who-smoke-ask-to-be-treated-with-respect>)



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