

Anna McCullough, MSW, MSPH, CTTS; Carol Ripley-Moffitt, MDiv, CTTS; Susan Trout, LCSW, MSPH, CTTS; Adam O Goldstein, MD, MPH

Nicotine Dependence Program, Department of Family Medicine, UNC School of Medicine

Background

- Improving integration of tobacco treatment into behavioral healthcare a priority issue for reducing tobacco-related disparities
- Professional Social Workers well positioned to meet this charge:
 - 40% in behavioral health/substance abuse treatment settings
 - Case management & psychosocial services provided in multiple settings
 - Have expertise facilitating client-led change & leading systems level & policy interventions
- Engaging Social Work students in tobacco use treatment (TUT) internship experiences may:
 - Increase buy-in among social work students & educators about fit between social work & tobacco treatment
 - Instill tobacco use treatment skills & knowledge that students will apply to coursework and future internship and work opportunities
 - Expand reach of the tobacco treatment in many settings
- Better understanding of knowledge and attitudes needed to maximize impact of such internship experiences

The UNC Nicotine Dependence Program (NDP) Social Work Field Placement Experience

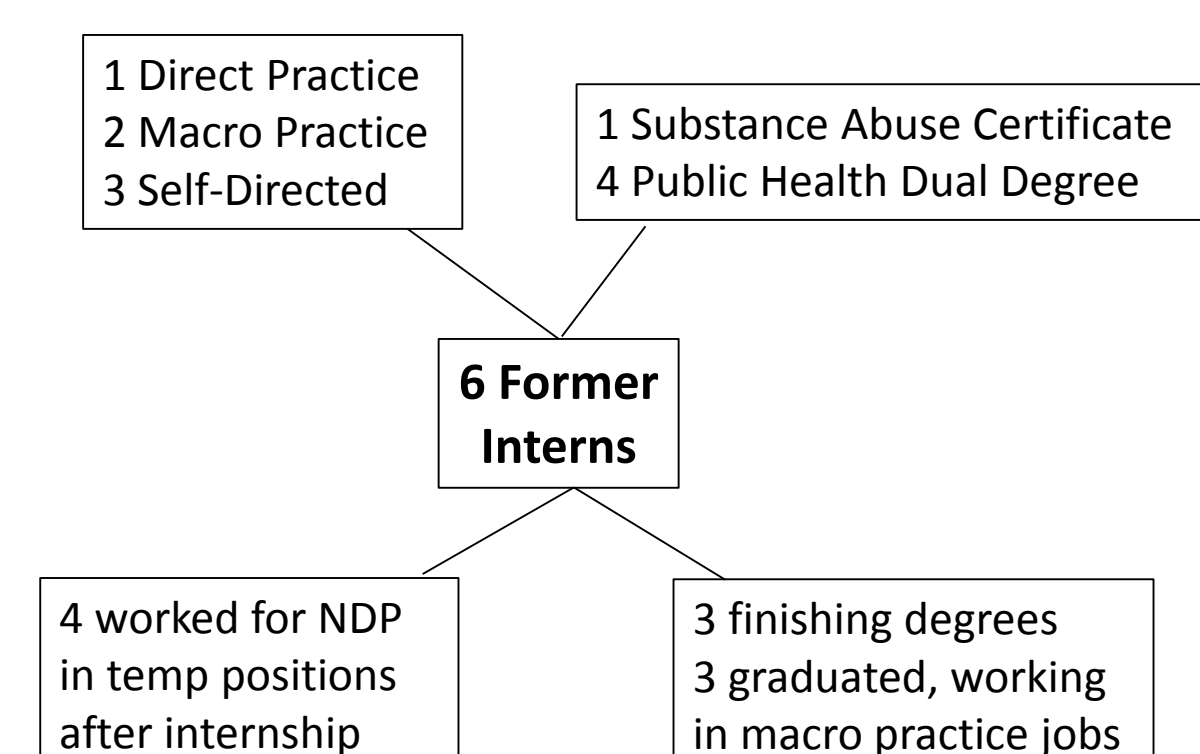
- Nine interns (3 current) since NDP became placement in 2010
- Interns spend 2 or 3 days per week with outpatient clinics at Family Medicine and Cancer Hospital and the "Inpatient 2 Outpatient" program
- Students become proficient in Tobacco Treatment Specialist core competencies through training, shadowing, and supervised practice:
 - Assist with treatment groups and independently complete patient consults
 - Facilitate treatment planning and provide follow-up
 - Advocate for patients within healthcare system
 - Assist with community outreach, proposal development, and evaluation

Surveys

Intern Online Survey

Assessed NDP experience:

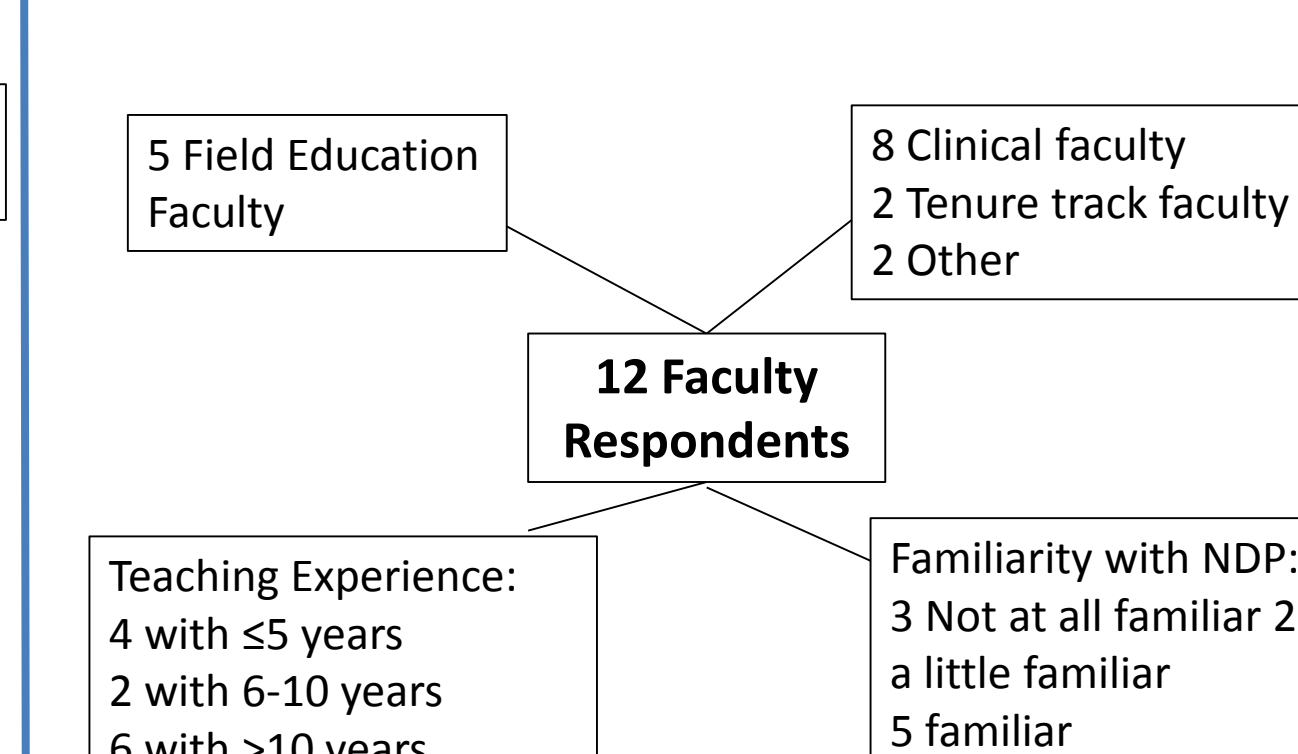
- application of knowledge and skills in coursework and practice
- perceptions of fit with social work training
- ideas for improved integration
- n=6 (100% response rate)



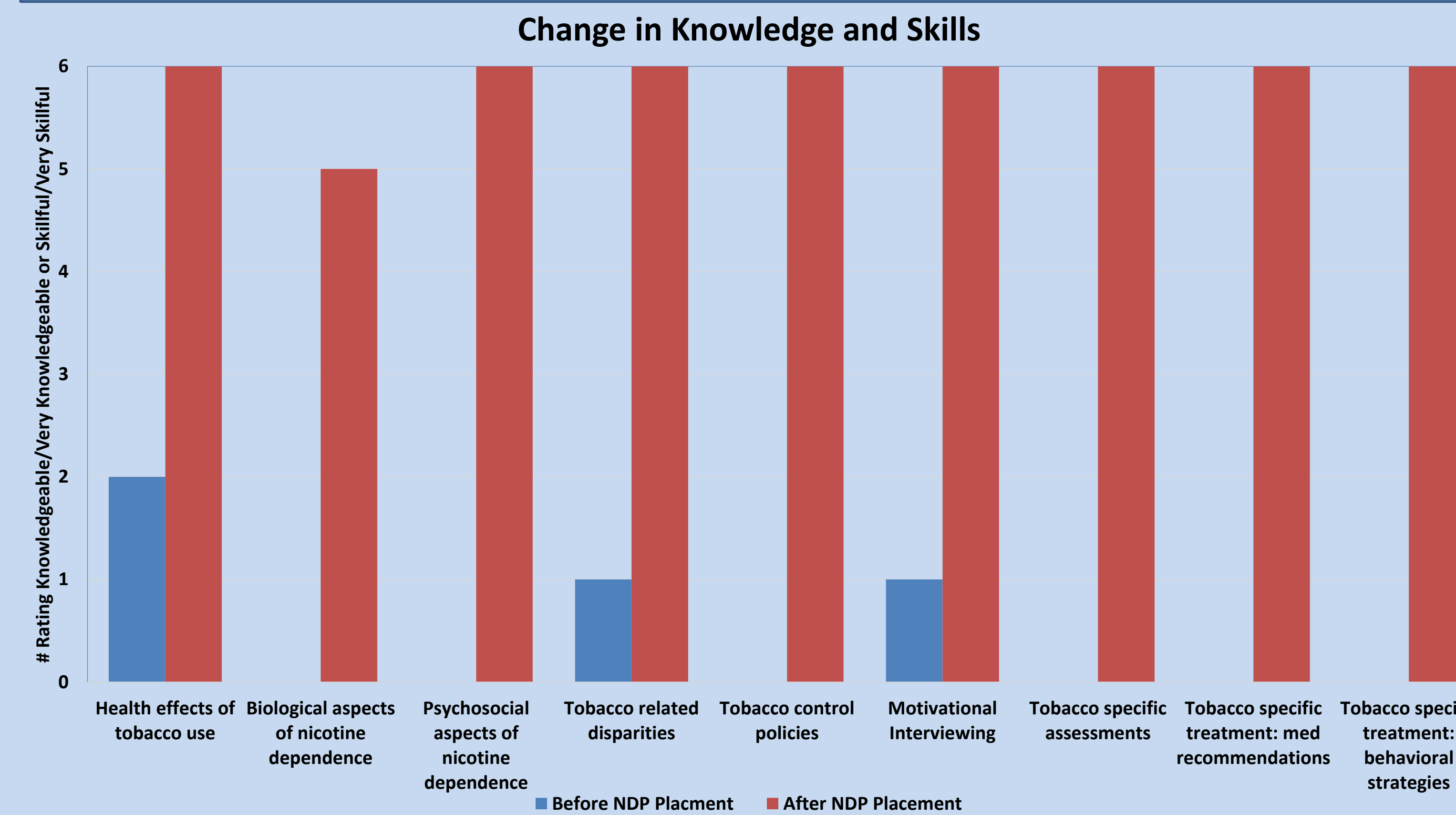
Faculty Online Survey

Provided description of NDP internship & assessed:

- awareness of NDP placement
- attitudes about tobacco treatment
- perceptions about "fit" with social work educational goals and ethics
- ideas for improved integration
- n=12 (12% response rate)



Results – Interns (n=6)



Fit with Social Work Education & Practice

Extent to which:	A little	Somewhat	A great deal
Able to apply knowledge or skills gained through NDP to social work coursework	0	0	6
NDP internship influenced direct practice skill development	0	0	6
NDP internship influenced macro practice skill development	0	3	3
Applied direct practice skills gained through NDP to other internships/jobs	0	2	4
Applied macro skills gained through NDP to other internships/jobs	2	3	1

TUT – Specific Attitudes and Application

Did your NDP experience influence way in which you view tobacco use treatment for clients in:	Yes
Behavioral health treatment settings	6
Substance abuse treatment settings	5
Other social service settings	5

Extent to which:	Not at all/A little	Somewhat	A great deal
Applied tobacco treatment specific skills to other internships/jobs	3	1	2
Applied tobacco treatment specific knowledge to other internships/jobs	2	2	2

Ideas to Improve Fit and Integration

- Better alignment with macro coursework:
 - "...having more access to the administrative side of how NDP works"
 - "...possibly more overall focus on environmental and policy factors..."
- Direct training opportunities
 - "...in-service and continuing education training with faculty who teach related courses."
 - "NDP staff can guest lecture at schools or record a presentation ...on tobacco use, treatment, and the individual and institutional issues that need to be addressed."
 - "facilitate a panel discussion or presentation"
- Opportunities for curricula specific integration:
 - "The health disparity policy class could really benefit from discussion of tobacco control policies. What a great issue to demonstrate the ethical issues."
 - "NDP should be incorporated into guest lectures on topics related to substance abuse."
 - "...perhaps develop brief curricular materials that we could incorporate into class"
 - "...meet with faculty who teach substance abuse and health practice courses..."

Results – Faculty (n=12)

Fit With Social Work Education and Practice

Extent to which you believe NDP internship provides opportunities for students to build skills in ten core competencies defined by Council on Social Work Education:	Very little/Somewhat	A great deal	Do not know
Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly	1	8	3
Apply social work ethical principles to guide practice	1	8	3
Apply critical thinking skills to inform and communicate professional judgments	3	8	1
Engage diversity and difference in practice	2	7	3
Advance human rights and social and economic justice	4	3	5
Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research	2	8	2
Apply knowledge of human behavior and social environment	1	10	1
Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services	5	4	3
Respond to contexts that shape practice	1	9	2
Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities	2	9	1

Extent to which agree with following:	Strongly Disagree / Disagree	Neutral	Agree/ Strongly Agree
Tobacco use is a social justice issue	0	4	8
Tobacco control and tobacco use treatment are priority issues for social workers	1	5	7
Tobacco use should be addressed with all clients in behavioral health treatment settings	1	1	10
Tobacco use should be addressed with all clients in substance abuse settings	1	2	9
Tobacco use/nicotine addiction should be addressed as fully as other drugs of abuse in the substance abuse curriculum	1	1	10
Tobacco use/nicotine addiction is currently addressed as fully as other drugs of abuse in the substance abuse curriculum	7	4	1
Extent to which you believe:	Very Little/Somewhat	Neutral	A great deal
Tobacco use treatment aligns with social work values and ethics	0	1	11

"This placement provides a forum for direct client engagement and behavioral practice, but also reflection on program and policy aspects..."

"...critical issues related to how the medical model might view approaches to tobacco cessation and how social work views it...great learning for students to navigate between these two approaches..."

"Tobacco use is something powerful interests advocate for at the detriment of those with low levels of knowledge and resources and is very much related to social work."

"Social work is very much concerned with addiction and addiction treatment, nicotine is no different."

Points of greatest alignment between TUT and Social Work:
"respecting client self determination"
"Supporting overall health and mental health of the person"

Significant gaps between TUT and Social Work:
"very narrow focus and people served often have very complex issues"
"If clients don't want to quit smoking and aren't currently suffering smoking-related health effects, then it is neither ethical nor client centered to force treatment on them."

Limitations

- Small sample sizes preclude generalizability
- Self-report measures

Conclusions

- Former interns rate NDP experience highly and report strong TUT and Social Work skill development and application
- Interns and faculty respondents perceive TUT as good fit with Social Work education and practice
- Outreach (e.g. trainings, lectures) from NDP to School of Social Work needed to strengthen integration of TUT into Social Work curricula

This work was an unfunded project of the UNC Nicotine Dependence Program (NDP). The UNC NDP programs are funded by the UNC Department of Family Medicine, UNC Health Care, and the Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center. The authors have no conflicts of interest to report. Many thanks to Jill Harris, BSW, for her ideas and assistance with this project.