Tobacco Use in LGBT Communities

Nearly ONE IN THREE lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) adults smoke, a rate that is more than 50% higher than other adults\(^{(1)}\)

- Smoking results in significant health disparities and kills 30,000+ LGBT people per year.\(^{(2)}\)
- Transgender smoking rates have been reported as high as 83%.\(^{(3)}\) Transgender people who have experienced structural discrimination have 65% higher odds of being a current smoker.\(^{(4)}\)
- Bisexual women have 2.6 times higher odds of smoking compared to heterosexual women.\(^{(5)}\)
- LGB high school students use tobacco products at a rate of 40.5%, including 19.2% who smoke, which is twice the rate of other students. Transgender youth smoke at a rate of 31%. Read our youth fact sheet at lgbthealthlink.org/fact-sheets.

Other tobacco products are also disproportionately used by LGBT people

- 9.4% of LGBT adults are active e-cigarette users, which is almost double the rate of non-LGBT adults, and a full quarter of LGBT people had tried e-cigarettes as of 2013.\(^{(11)}\)
- LGB adults use cigars, cigarillos, pipes, and hookah at 1.5 to 3 times the rate of others.\(^{(12)}\)
Different groups within the diverse LGBT population have different risks

- **LGBT African Americans** are twice as likely as white LGB adults to attempt quitting smoking, but have a third as many former smokers.\(^{(13)}\) Black LGB youth smoke cigars and clove cigarettes 66% more than white LGB youth and 225% more than black heterosexual youth.\(^{(14)}\)

- **LGB Hispanic youth** are twice as likely to smoke cigarettes and 60% more likely to smoke hookah than heterosexual Hispanics.\(^{(14)}\)

- **American Indians & Alaska Natives** smoke more than any other group at 39%. At the same time, 45.8% of LGB Alaskan Natives smoke,\(^{(15)}\) and LGB American Indians likely smoke at an elevated rate as well.

- **Rural LGBT people** smoke at least as much as urban LGBT people and may not feel comfortable coming out to their providers or be able to access LGBT-inclusive cessation programs.\(^{(17-19)}\)

- **Low-income LGBT people** and those without a college degree are more likely to be smokers.\(^{(20)}\)

- **People living with HIV**, who are disproportionately LGBT, smoke at two to three times the rate of others,\(^{(21)}\) lose more years of life from smoking than from HIV,\(^{(22)}\) and face compounded health risks.\(^{(21)}\)

LGBT people can quit with proper support and interventions

- LGB adults have the same desire to quit and, with the exception of bi women, have the same number of quit attempts as other smokers.\(^{(23)}\) However, LGB smokers who wanted to quit were five times less likely than others to intend to call a quitline.\(^{(25)}\)

- Additionally, only 23% of LGBT folks use nicotine replacement therapy,\(^{(24)}\) a cessation aid that is a recommended best practice and is often covered by insurance.\(^{(26)}\)

- LGBT folks benefit from LGBT-specific cessation groups, programs, and messaging.\(^{(6)}\)

- LGBT people are 1.8 times as likely to prepare to quit if they are comfortable asking their doctor for help.\(^{(27)}\) Health care professionals should create a welcoming and tobacco-free clinical environment, reach out to LGBT smokers, and connect them to services.\(^{(18-30)}\)

References for this document can be found at:
http://hlthlnk.lgbt/fact-sheets