



## BACKGROUND

**There is no risk-free level of secondhand smoke exposure; even brief exposure can be harmful to health.**

Cigarette smoking is higher among low-income adults and individuals who reside in federally assisted housing and who are particularly susceptible to the adverse effects of smoking and secondhand smoke exposure.

One-third of adults receiving federal housing assistance smoked cigarettes during 2006-2012, which is approximately double the rate of smoking among the general population of U.S. adults during that time period. Wisconsin public housing residents have similarly high rates of smoking. The Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee (HACM) provides assistance to nearly 6000 household and 10,000 residents.

In support of its mission to provide a good quality of life for its residents, the Wisconsin-funded tobacco prevention networks have been instrumental in supporting smoking cessation in Milwaukee's public



# Innovative Strategies for Engaging Public Housing Residents in Smoke-Free Housing Compliance

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## METHODOLOGY



### HUD Smoke-Free Policy Rule

In 2018 Housing and Urban Development (HUD) began requiring all of its public housing to be smoke-free (with the exception of mixed-finance properties). Under the new rule, smoking is not allowed anywhere inside of the building. In addition, no one may smoke within 25 feet of any building on HUD public housing grounds.

### Innovative Partnership:

- American Lung Association
- City of Milwaukee Health Department
- Hayat Pharmacy
- Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee
- Public housing residents and Unison (faith-based organization)
- Wisconsin African American Tobacco Prevention Network
- Wisconsin Tobacco Prevention and Poverty Network

**The year leading up to the implementation of the HUD Smoke-Free Housing Policy our innovative partnership collaborated to:**

- Provided resources and technical support to HACM in developing its smoke-free policy
- Disseminated 6000 postcards alerting residents to the new smoke-free public housing policy
- Supported residents in participating the development of the smoke-free public housing policy and leasing agreement
- Offered Tobacco 101 and SFH workshops
- Recruited public housing residents into the Freedom From Smoking (FFS) Cessation Program
- Hosted FFS cessation sessions onsite at public housing
- Provided onsite pharmacist for Q&A discussions at public housing
- Provided Smoke-free/e-cigarette signage to all 26 HUD properties in Milwaukee

## RESULTS



**After the policy went into effect our partnership:**

- Established a Smoke-Free Housing Subcommittee
- Expanded our partnership to include UW Center for Tobacco Research and Intervention
- Designed a survey to assess residents opinions on the enforcement of the smoke-free housing policy, residents smoking cessation behaviors, services and resources utilized and service and resource gaps
- Trained 9 residents to collect surveys using survey monkey and tablets



## DATA COLLECTION AND NEXT STEPS



The study involves a convenience sample of 600 public housing adult residents. These data are currently being collected by trained public housing residents and will be used to help inform further implementation of the smoke-free public housing policy.

## DISCUSSION

- Engaging residents in the design, implementation and monitoring of smoke-free public housing is a best practice.
- Smoke-free housing offers health benefits to public housing residents and visitors.
- Smoke-free housing offers savings in renovation, health related expenses and fire loss.
- Enforcement may be an issue.
- Eviction may be an issue.

### Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Cigarette smoking and adverse health outcomes among adults receiving federal housing assistance, Veronica E Helms, Brian A. King, Peter J. Ashley, Preventive Medicine, Volume 99, June 2017, pages 171-177
- <sup>2</sup> <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/tobacco/index.htm>
- <sup>3</sup> [https://www.hud.gov/sites/documents/4\\_SMOKEF\\_FS\\_INFORESIDENTS.PDF](https://www.hud.gov/sites/documents/4_SMOKEF_FS_INFORESIDENTS.PDF)



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