

Effective Communication on Tobacco Product Risk and FDA Authority

Communicating the Risks of Harmful Cigarette Smoke Constituents (Project 1)

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Abstract:

The 2009 Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act requires tobacco manufacturers to disclose the prevalence of harmful and potentially harmful constituents in each of their products by brand and sub-brand. This wealth of data will be novel and informative, but its likely impact on the public remains wholly unknown. The proposed project aims to understand the impact of the new constituent information on smokers' risk beliefs and cigarette smoking, building toward a randomized controlled trial that examines whether constituent labels on cigarette packs that smokers use every day alter cessation behavior. The project will oversample adolescents, Blacks, Hispanics, and gay, lesbians, and bisexuals, allowing subgroup analyses for these key populations. Aim 1 will identify tobacco constituents that adults and adolescents find threatening and that discourage them from wanting to smoke. First, we will conduct 6 focus groups to qualitatively assess how adults and adolescents think about constituents. To quantify constituents' effect on risk beliefs and discouragement from wanting to smoke, we will then conduct a population-based phone survey (n=4,600, ages 13-65), jointly with our Center's other research projects. Aim 2 will develop a library of risk messages about Aim 1 constituents that are most likely to discourage people from smoking. We will test these messages qualitatively using 14 focus groups and quantitatively through an online survey with adults and adolescents. The research team will select two especially promising messages that discourage smoking in all groups for use as pack labels for further experimental testing. In Aim 3, we will randomly assign 672 adult smokers to receive cigarettes with no label or one of the two labels identified in Aim 2. The study design will determine which labels most effectively increase adult smokers' cessation behaviors (quitting, attempting to quit, or smoking fewer cigarettes), including stratified analyses for Black smokers.