

## POSTER ABSTRACTS

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#### **Do Behavioral Smoking Reduction Approaches Reach More or Different Smokers? Different Designs; Similar Answers**

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**Background:** Most approaches to smoking cessation attract only a minority of smokers, and may have reached a plateau in terms of their effectiveness at somewhere around 25-30% for long-term maintenance. There is a need for innovative approaches capable of reaching smokers who would not otherwise participate in efforts to modify their smoking.

**Methods:** We report on two studies that assessed whether a smoking reduction intervention would appeal to additional or different types of smokers than do cessation interventions. Two separate studies were conducted in the Kaiser Permanente - Colorado (KPCO) health care system. Both studies tested the feasibility and logistics of a recruitment protocol and estimated participation rates for both smoking reduction and cessation interventions. Telephone interviewers from a computer assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) unit were used to contact smoking patients from KPCO who were scheduled for an outpatient surgery (study 1) and outpatient surgeries and procedures (study 2). After describing both cessation based and smoking reduction approaches, smokers were asked if they would enlist in cessation (recommended option), smoking reduction, or neither program. In Study 2, an actual pilot reduction program was offered to 531 individuals who met study criteria.

**Results:** In Study 1, among 110 persons contacted and determined to be eligible, 39% elected smoking reduction, 38% selected cessation, and 23% declined participation. In Study 2, among 184 persons contacted and determined or estimated to be eligible, 24.9% joined the smoking reduction program, 13.6% preferred a cessation approach, and 61.5% declined. In both studies, the characteristics of smokers selecting reduction, cessation, and declining were similar. In Study 2, smokers who chose the reduction program were significantly less likely ( $p < 0.05$ ) than non-participants or smokers preferring cessation to have attempted quitting in the previous year.

**Conclusions:** Smoking reduction programs may activate smokers who are not ready for cessation to initiate positive changes in their smoking behaviors. These data suggest the need for more intervention research on harm reduction, particularly as a way to extend reach among smokers.