Fact Sheet: Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Tobacco Use

- Current use data shows that almost 17% of the AAPI adult population smoke, however, rates vary amongst the different subgroups (CDC, 1997).

- Past month tobacco use rates were higher for immigrants aged 18 or older from Japan (24%), Korea (30.2%), and Vietnam (25.5%) compared with adult immigrants from the Philippines (13.5%) or China (10.1%) (SAMHSA, 2005).

- For past year tobacco use, foreign-born persons from Japan (26.1%), Korea (33.4%), and Vietnam (27.3%) had higher rates than persons from China (13.5%) and the Philippines (16.7%) (SAMHSA, 2005).

- Research shows an association between cigarette smoking and acculturation among AAPI adults from Southeast Asia. Those who had a higher English-language proficiency and those living in the U.S. longer were less likely to be smokers (CDC, 1998).

- Among AAPI males, Laotians and Cambodians have the highest smoking rates at 72% and 71%, respectively. Among Pacific Islander males, Tongans and Palauans have the highest smoking rates at 65% and 53%, respectively (Asian Pacific Partners for Empowerment and Leadership (APPEAL, 2000).

- AAPIs who smoke habitually, smoke more than any other group per day, i.e. 16.8 cigarettes per day (Prevention Alert. Vol.5, No.7, May 2001).

- Among AAPI high school seniors, 4.4% of male students and 4.5% of females students reported smoking a half pack of cigarettes or more per day (American Lung Association, 2000).

- The number of Asian American smokers increases seven fold from junior high to high school ("National Youth Tobacco Survey", 2000).

- Smoking prevalence among AAPIs from 6th to 12th grade increases more rapidly than any other ethnic groups ("National Youth Tobacco Survey", 2000).

- It is estimated that between 15,000-20,000 AAPIs will die every year from tobacco-related illnesses (APPEAL, 2000).

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