

**IN THIS ISSUE: SECONDHAND TOBACCO SMOKE EXPOSURE**

**Secondhand Tobacco Smoke Exposure**

Cigarette smoking not only increases adverse health effects for smokers, but can also impact others’ health through exposure to secondhand smoke (SHS). In general, SHS exposure occurs when non-smokers breathe in smoke exhaled by smokers (mainstream smoke) or from burning tobacco products (sidestream smoke). Although SHS exposure has dropped in recent years, one in four non-smokers in the U.S. are still exposed to SHS.<sup>1</sup>

**Table 1. Current Tobacco Use and Status**

	<b>Nevada</b>	<b>Washoe County</b>
Smoke cigarette everyday	11.1%	9.7%
Smoke cigarette some days	6.5%	4.9%

*2017 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Prevalence & Trends Data*

The overall cigarette smoking rate in Washoe County (14.6%) was slightly lower than Nevada’s rate (17.6%) in 2017.

**Background**

Among non-smokers, SHS exposure is higher among children, workers who live below the poverty level, and those who live in multi-unit housing rentals.<sup>1</sup>

The primary source of SHS exposure for children ages three to 11 years comes from their homes.<sup>1</sup> Although secondhand smoke exposure among children has fallen over the past 15 years, children are still more heavily exposed to secondhand smoke than adults.<sup>7</sup> About 29% of housing types in Washoe County are multi-unit housing like apartments that have shared ventilation systems.<sup>2</sup> Heating, ventilating, and air conditioning systems cannot control exposure to SHS. As a result, individuals living in multi-unit housing, including condos, can be exposed to SHS from neighbors who smoke inside adjoining units.<sup>3</sup>

**Table 2. SHS Exposure at Home**

	<b>Nevada</b>	<b>Washoe County</b>
SHS infiltrates home daily	8%	8%
SHS infiltrates home weekly	2%	2%
SHS infiltrates home monthly	3%	4%
SHS infiltrates home less than monthly	9%	7%
SHS never infiltrates the home	76%	78%

*2016 Nevada Adult Tobacco Survey*

Many of Nevada’s workplaces and indoor public places are required to be 100% smoke-free by state law through the Nevada Clean Indoor Air Act (NCIAA). Among other locations, standalone bars and gaming areas of casinos are exempt. These locations are public locations and workplaces where non-smoking workers and patrons are exposed to SHS smoke. In 2008, the percentage of employees exposed to SHS working in casinos was 73%, and in 2016 that percentage increased to 82% in Nevada.<sup>4</sup> The number of employees estimated to be exposed to SHS working in casinos was 290,116 in 2017 and it is projected to increase up to 295,036 employees in 2018 statewide.<sup>8</sup>

**Health Effects of Secondhand Smoke Exposure**

SHS is the leading cause of preventable death in the U.S.<sup>5</sup> More than 41,000 deaths annually are related to SHS exposure.<sup>5</sup> In the 2006 report, *The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke*, the Surgeon General concluded that there is no safe level of SHS exposure. Conditions that have been linked to SHS exposure in children include middle ear disease, respiratory symptoms, impaired lung function, lower respiratory illness, and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). Health conditions caused by SHS in non-smoking adults include stroke, nasal irritation, lung cancer, coronary heart disease, and low birth weight in pregnant women.

Table 3. Mortality Data for Specific Chronic Health Conditions in Washoe County, 2012-2016

Health Conditions	Trend	2016
Asthma	Increasing	1.1 per 100,000
Cancer	Increasing	171.0 per 100,000
Cancer of Trachea, Bronchus and Lung	Stable	39.2 per 100,000
Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease	Increasing	53.7 per 100,000
Heart Failure	Increasing	7.7 per 100,000
Stroke	Stable	34.8 per 100,000

2012-2016 Nevada Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Data<sup>6</sup>

In general, chronic health conditions showed a steady increase from 2012-2016 in Washoe County.

### Recommendations

Healthcare providers can help protect patients and families from SHS exposure by following the 5 A's model.

1. **Ask** all patients about exposure to SHS at home and work
2. **Advise** patients to protect themselves and their children from SHS, including avoiding locations that permit smoking
3. **Assess** risk and provide appropriate screening tests for patients who are regularly exposed to SHS
4. **Assist** patients by providing information about the risks of SHS exposure and tobacco cessation resources for tobacco users
5. **Arrange** follow-up with patients at the next visit about SHS exposure

In Washoe County, health care professionals can refer their patients to smoke-free resources and tobacco cessation programs below.

### Smoke-free Multi-Unit Housing Directory

The Washoe County Health District's Chronic Disease Prevention Program has assisted multi-unit housing property owners and managers in adopting no-smoking policies. There are currently 56 smoke-free units in Washoe County. For access to the Washoe County smoke-free multi-unit housing directory, please visit [GetHealthyWashoe.com](http://GetHealthyWashoe.com)

### Smoke-free Meetings and Events Directory

Nevada has a smoke-free meeting and event directory for businesses, organizations, and individuals looking to

host events, meetings and conferences in 100% smoke-free locations. For a list of meeting locations, please visit [smokefreemeetings.org](http://smokefreemeetings.org)

**Baby & Me – Tobacco Free Program (B&MTF)** helps pregnant women and their partners/household members quit smoking during pregnancy to improve birth outcomes, and to postnatally stay tobacco-free for at least 12 months to reduce the risks of SHS exposure for newborns in the home. The program offers tobacco cessation education at no-cost and diaper gift cards to women and eligible partners. To obtain B&MTF brochures or referral forms, please visit [GetHealthyWashoe.com](http://GetHealthyWashoe.com). For more information on the national B&MTF program, please visit [babyandmetobaccofree.org](http://babyandmetobaccofree.org)

The **Nevada Tobacco Quitline** is a telephonic cessation program that offers professional coaching sessions, Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) medications, and customized educational materials free of charge to support the needs of those seeking to quit tobacco and nicotine use. One tool that health care systems and providers can use to help refer clients to the quitline is a direct referral to these cessation services through their electronic medical records (EMR). This "e-referral" allows a provider to obtain consent from a patient and send the quitline the patient's contact information to initiate the cessation process. For more information about connecting an EMR system to the Quitline through direct referrals, please contact us at [GetHealthy@washoecounty.us](mailto:GetHealthy@washoecounty.us)

### References

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