

COMMUNITY SMOKE-FREE PROJECTS PROGRAM: Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre

Smokerlyzers for starting conversations about smoking

Project summary

Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre (TAC) is an Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (ACCHO)¹ providing a comprehensive range of services, including primary healthcare, dental, and emotional and social wellbeing programs.

TAC successfully implemented use of Smokerlyzers (carbon monoxide monitors) in their health clinics – a sustainable change to their *makara patapa* / Quit Smoking program. Tina Goodwin, AOD Coordinator, says “The Smokerlyzers provide an education tool for community to start conversations about being healthier, reduce health complications, and have Aboriginal people living longer and healthier.”

What did we start with?

TAC has a well-developed *makara patapa* / Quit Smoking program and wanted to extend this program with Smokerlyzers as a tool to support education around smoking and collect data to better understand the nicotine addiction levels within the Aboriginal community.

TAC has five health clinics to support 715 Aboriginal health checks around the state. TAC used the smoke-free grant to purchase five Smokerlyzers to place in each health clinic as an educational tool to engage clients in conversations about smoking status, reducing intake and/or quitting, and the health benefits from quitting smoking.

All staff were trained how to use the Smokerlyzers, educated on motivational intervention, nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) products, and having the energy to start brief intervention conversations about smoking with clients.



Clients were either shocked, excited, intrigued or interested after their Smokerlyzer result and couldn't wait to see if they could get their reading down at the next opportunity or wanted to bring family and friends in to have a go.”

— TINA GOODWIN, AOD COORDINATOR



TAC's aim was to purchase five Smokerlyzers as an education tool and to start conversations about smoking.

Successes

- 76 Smokerlyzer readings and opportunities to discuss smoking in the Aboriginal community across the state.
- Updated *Communicare* Quit Smoking software to record baseline smoking status and Smokerlyzer results.

Learnings

- Develop your plan, source products, and educate staff before starting a project.
- Collect data *and* videos and images for social media to involve community.



Smokerlyzer device



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¹ An ACCHO is a primary health care service initiated and operated by the local Aboriginal community to deliver holistic, comprehensive, and culturally appropriate health care to the community which controls it, through a locally elected Board of Management. Aboriginal Community Controlled Health - NACCHO

What did we finish with?

- Smokerlyzers created interest and prompted lots of questions – clients were eager to see their results and interested about healthier options.
- Smokerlyzer results create accountability in a fun way and clients are keen to see if they make positive changes at their next reading.
- Improved Communicare Quit Smoking proforma to record community stories of current smoking status, history of smoking, and Smokerlyzer results for individual clients.



Great idea

Smokerlyzers are educational tools that can be used to create interest, start conversations, and provide visual evidence of nicotine levels.

What were the successes along the way?

- Education for all staff around use of Smokerlyzers, NRT products, quit support pathways, and how to have motivational conversations.
- Brief intervention conversations with clients led to 76 Smokerlyzer readings and opportunities to discuss smoking in the Aboriginal community across the state.
- Clients having a visual number to see firsthand their addiction levels and an opportunity to improve the outcome.
- Clients not ready to make any change have a baseline recorded in their medical file for future reference.

Community Smoke-free Projects Program

Part of the TasCOSS [Supporting Smoke-free Community Services](#) project was to provide 10 community service organisations (CSOs) with \$5,000 each to conduct a small project to progress towards smoke-free work areas and services. The trust-based funding model for the grants was simple and equitable for organisations with limited time and resources. TasCOSS and Quit Tasmania collaborated with each CSO to develop an idea that was relevant to that organisation and the people who used their services.

What were the challenges?

- Access for pregnant clients was difficult – there is a need to prioritise support of this population.
- Finding time and availability for staff to complete training.
- Some clients were hesitant to use the Smokerlyzer but were reassured after a discussion with clinical staff about what it was measuring.

Sharing what we learned

- Develop your plan, think about what you want to report and how, design evaluation tools.
- Collect data *and* videos and images for social media to involve community.
- Source products and complete staff education before implementing project.
- Choose a leader for the project team and define job roles.
- Start your project as part of a community event.
- Word of mouth – get community talking about your project.



New resource

[How to get your organisation smoke-free ready.](#)



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