

Research to Reduce Tobacco-Related Inequalities around the World Call for Abstracts

Background:

On March 8, 2009, the Tobacco Research Network on Disparities (TReND) held a preconference workshop at the 14th World Conference on Tobacco or Health titled, Research to Reduce Tobacco-Related Inequalities: Worldwide Implications For and Exemplars of Tobacco Control, in Mumbai, India. The goals of the workshop were to 1) increase understanding of how systems of social stratification, e.g., gender, class, race, ethnicity, caste, region, etc., are defined in various countries and implications for tobacco control; 2) provide examples of outcomes resulting from tobacco-related inequalities (e.g., illness, mortality, etc.); 3) demonstrate measurement and research design strategies used to address tobacco-related inequalities; and 4) share exemplars of interventions addressing tobacco-related inequalities. As a follow-up to the workshop, TReND is issuing an international call for papers to further address the role of social stratification in tobacco-related inequalities. Interested authors are asked to submit a brief 300-word abstract by February 26, 2010.

Research Questions:

According to the World Health Organization, tobacco is the leading cause of preventable death and disease in the world, causing more than 4.2 million premature deaths worldwide every year. It is projected that by 2030, 8 million people will prematurely die annually from tobacco use with 80% of these deaths expected to occur in low- and middle-income countries. Systems of social stratification such as gender, age, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, geography and caste have been shown to be important determinants of tobacco-related inequalities. Broadly defined, tobacco-related inequalities, which may also be referred to as tobacco-related health disparities, can be conceptualized as the differences in the patterns and treatment of tobacco use; the risk, incidence, morbidity, and mortality of tobacco-related illness; and the related differences in community capacity and infrastructure, access to resources, and secondhand smoke exposure that exist among specific population groups. Tobacco use inequalities occur along the entire tobacco use continuum including initiation, current use, consumption, cessation, relapse, level of dependence, and psychosocial and societal resources. While research sheds light on some of these inequalities, there are many challenges in attempting to unravel the effects of social stratification on tobacco-related outcomes.

Selected papers will address one or more of the following research questions:

- How do different social stratification systems, such as gender, class, race, ethnicity, caste, region, etc., contribute to tobacco-related inequalities, particularly those in low- and middle-income countries?
- What valid and reliable constructs and tools are being used to measure the role of social stratification in tobacco-related inequalities?
- What types of interventions and policies have been conducted and evaluated at the individual and population-based levels that have potential to reduce the tobacco-related inequalities?

TReND will consider papers that report original research, conceptual or theoretical papers, meta-analyses, and systematic reviews. Due to the rapidly increasing epidemic of tobacco use in low- and middle-income countries, priority will be given to papers that address these research questions in countries defined by the World Bank as low-income, lower-middle-income, and upper-middle-income.

Instructions:

Please submit a brief abstract for review by **February 26, 2010**, to Allison Rose (rosea@mail.nih.gov). The abstract should not exceed 300 words and should include the study purpose and objectives, and a brief description of the study design and methods. Authors of accepted abstracts will be notified by **March 22, 2010** and asked to submit a complete manuscript for internal review by the editorial team being led by Drs. Eliseo Perez-Stable (Professor, Department of Medicine, University of California, San Francisco) and K. Vish Viswanath (Associate Professor, Department of Society, Human Development and Health, Harvard School of Public Health). Manuscripts will be due for internal review on **May 28, 2010**. Upon approval, authors will then be asked to submit the manuscript for peer-review with the selected journal by **August 16, 2010**.

Please address any questions to Dr. Eliseo Perez (eliseops@medicine.ucsf.edu) or Dr. Vish Viswanath (vish_viswanath@dfci.harvard.edu).