

# Cumberland County New Mainers Tobacco Use and Cultural Habits Research

## Report

*Prepared for: City of Portland*

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# Methodology

# Methodology

## Background

The City of Portland Maine and its surroundings are one of the states most important areas for resettlement of refugee and New Mainer populations. Many of these populations have cultural attitudes, experiences, and ways of understanding around important health information that differ from long-time Maine residents. To better understand these differences as they related to tobacco use, the City contracted with Market Decisions Research (MDR) to conduct a series of research efforts to better understand the views of these communities.

## Methods

MDR worked with the City and staff to create a robust protocol that used multiple avenues of research to understand these topics. MDR and city staff created an interview guide to conduct one-on-one interviews with key stakeholders in New Mainer communities in and around Portland. A moderator guide for focus groups was also created, and MDR worked with City Community Health Workers (CHW) to recruit participants.

In addition, the focus group moderator guide was turned into an online survey instrument which was emailed to community residents to offer additional insight into their tobacco use perceptions.

## Interview and Discussion Guide

All interview and discussion guides were created by Market Decisions Research, with input and guidance from City of Portland Public Health staff. The guides are included in the Appendix of this report.

## Data Collection

All data was collected through spring and summer of 2022, between April and July. Interviews and focus groups were conducted via telephone and virtually over meeting software. All survey data was collected online, sending emailed invitations to community contacts maintained by City CHWs.



# Findings:

## *Community Leader In-depth Interviews*





## Part 1: Experience

Q01. Can you tell me about yourself, your community, and your role in the community?

### What they are saying:

*"I have a Master's in Health Policy and Management. I work for the [Redacted] Public School System in the multilingual office. I have worked in the public realm and I used to work at [Redacted] Hospital as well. I've been in the education system for the last ... since 2013, so nine years I've been working in the education system. I also live in [Redacted] and I have two teenage sons. I also have that community as well." (IDI 2)*

*"I am a foreign attorney at law, but in Maine, I do work mostly with New Mainers. On immigration and public health. Most recently, I worked as a coordinator at [Redacted] and also again, which a nonprofit organization based in [Redacted], urban area. But I do work with clients all over the States." (IDI 4)*

*"I'm the founder and executive director of [redacted]. We are a 501c3 since 2016, working more with the community, creating new programs based on the needs of the community (...). Our mission is to bridge the gap between the cultures. So we really do a lot of education, a lot of raising awareness about how the system works here, but also to help out the host community know more about their neighbors." (IDI 8)*

### Summary

Interview participants came from diverse backgrounds and had a variety of experiences within their community. Whether they immigrated to Maine or were born in the U.S, most participants came from professional backgrounds.

### Bottom Line

Participants came from diverse and mostly professional backgrounds.

## Part 1: Experience

*Q02. We're hoping to learn more about tobacco use. By tobacco use, I mean smoking cigarettes, vaping, chewing tobacco, or hookah smoking. What do you think about tobacco use in your community?*

### What they are saying:

*"It is very bad. I'm smoking, but I'm not a very heavy smoker. I like sometimes smoking hookah. Smoking hookah is not an addicting thing, it's more of a community thing. Like when we're sitting with friends, gathering, and that 'Oh, your friends are coming over, bring your hookah!' It's not addicting, it's more like that kind of thing" (IDI 1)*

*"I think the communities that I most see using tobacco when we're at like social or cultural events would probably be the Arabic speaking community and the Vietnamese speaking community. I think that they are generally tobacco users. For the Arabic community, I would say that there's a lot of hookah and a lot of actual, like normal cigarettes. And for the Vietnamese community we're talking about, I think primarily cigarettes. I don't see tobacco use in a lot of other communities in that same way." (IDI 5)*

*"In my religion, it's not allowed, people to get the tobacco. So, all the times with all the kids, so, 'Don't do that because that's not right, It will hurt yourself and your religion, so that's not right.' So, that help a lot, when you talk with your kids about your religion. And some people, if they know your religion... so, it's not common and told you, I need to sell you something, or I need to try this thing. So, when they know your religion, so it's Muslim people, so they will be stop, so that's good, if they know that religion is not allowed to do it, the tobacco." (IDI 7)*

## Summary

There were noticeable differences in perceptions of tobacco between immigrant communities . Participants from the Arabic community reported a significant amount of tobacco, and it's generally accepted as a social activity. Community leaders from central African communities reported there is no tobacco use and that it's is unaccepted within their community.

## Bottom Line

Immigrant communities have diverse attitudes towards tobacco products. As a result, rates of use between communities are varied.

## Part 1: Experience

Q03. What leads people in your community to try tobacco?

### What they are saying:

*"I think young people, it's just trying something that's not loud, that's taboo, that's perceived to be adult. I think there's some cultural issues around the hookah use. I think that just watching the cigar smoking in the bar environment and the places that have popped up in the last decade is also new, especially because I was involved in the whole eliminating tobacco smoke and second hand smoke. It seems like new things were found, like the whole vaping thing, I think caught the whole public health community by surprise, and certainly myself as a parent by surprise." (IDI 2)*

*"It's a big part of the culture, I believe. It's something that's available in a lot of countries. However, people used to do it only to kill time, again. Now, however, here, we see it more as, if I'm more stressed, I'm going to smoke more. So it's really becoming more a way of to socialize, to engage, and be with others." (IDI 8)*

*"I think it's just a habit. If they grow up looking at their parents or [inaudible 00:02:30] mothers a lot, or mom and dad smoke together, or uncles, so they want to try it because as children, they just want to know, what does it feel holding a cigarette? Their dad's smoking, so they think it's okay, and they sneak out and steal one here, one there, and they smoke it with their friends." (IDI 9)*

### Summary

Many participants believe people will try tobacco by following examples of others. They may try it in order to fit in, or to take advantage of the new freedoms found in their community.

### Bottom Line

New social environments and preexisting social norms can lead New Mainers to try tobacco.



## Part 2: Acculturation

Q04. When people in your community first move to Cumberland County, how does their tobacco use change?

### What they are saying:

*"I don't know exactly. Because maybe they find no tobacco in the house here. They are new in the community and you can get fired, the house can get fire all the time. There is many restriction about to how to take Tobacco. They hurry, have to go outside. We didn't grow up in as much cold. We were outside all the time. But this is cold. But maybe those things stop tobacco use, you know? The car we don't know if the car can get [inaudible 00:08:03], that's why they stop to use it." (IDI 3)*

*"I think some adolescents try to smoke, but they do hide themselves. They do try to smoke, but outside of their parents. I'm talking about my culture. I know from Somali people, a lot of kids do smoke, but from people from central Africa, regarding the age, some things do, but they do hide themselves. But most people who do it, those who are 30 years old and over." (IDI 4)*

*"I see more smoking than before because they added the hookah to the cigarettes, and more stress because they're in this new country, new culture. Everything is new to them, so it adds more stress." (IDI 9)*

### Summary

Participants reported that tobacco use may change to be used more for socializing, to cope with stress, and to relieve boredom. Younger people within the communities may try new forms of tobacco use out of curiosity, or users may reduce their tobacco consumption due to the colder environment.

### Bottom Line

Tobacco use within communities can change according to the needs of newcomers.

## Part 2: Acculturation

*Q05: For New Mainers in your community, have you noticed more use, less use, or no change in tobacco use?*

### What they are saying:

*"It is increasing. Especially when they were selling more of the hookahs and electronic cigarettes. It became very popular. Like everywhere. You can see there's some kids, you never expect that they're a smoker." (IDI 1)*

*"I do think that the increase in the high school kids in the last, maybe, five to 10 years definitely has an influence on other teens to try it. I think the vaping has become pretty wide scale in the high schools. Like any teenager, especially if you're a newcomer you're going to do what it is to fit in. I think the use is more of something they bring with them and they've kind of introduced to the rest of us, like that was a practice that they're used to doing." (IDI 2)*

*"I think people became more open about those things. Yeah. It used to be kind of very restricted and some people, they never smoke in front of their parents or family members or kids. But unfortunately here it's no, they are free to do whatever they want. Not all of them, but that's what I notice." (IDI 6)*

*"It's complicated. Depends on where they're coming from and how they were raised. So they blame everything on their religion. It's prohibited to smoke, prohibited to dress this way, prohibited to show hair, prohibited to go and dance in a club or have a boyfriend or girlfriend, but they all do it behind closed doors. And it's the same thing with cigarettes." (IDI 9)*

### Summary

Participants from Arabic communities and providers for immigrant communities reported that although it varies, there is an overall increase in tobacco use in New Mainers.

### Bottom Line

Interviewees felt there is an overall increase in tobacco use among New Mainers.

## Part 2: Acculturation

Q06. Are there any other motivations you think would drive new community members to start using tobacco for the first time?

### What they are saying:

*"I think that their lives are stressful and difficult when they're newly here. If something gives them some kind of relief that they're going to keep doing it. That's the only thing I can ... between the youth trying to be cooler, the adults just stressed out beyond belief." (IDI 2)*

*"Life is really stressful and it's been very stressful for immigrants lately. There's all kinds of stressful things. So I can see that really being a challenge as well. Like why should I give up the peace of mind that I get from this, or the break that I get from this. And the other thing too is like, if you are a smoker, I think you get an opportunity to take a break. And a lot of immigrants are such hard workers. They're doing so much work and if they didn't smoke cigarettes, they wouldn't get to take that break." (IDI 5)*

*"You cannot say, this is the main reason, or this is why. But mostly these days is because stress. Also, even though there's a lot of places now they cannot smoke in or around, but they still do it. So they are always blaming stress. So I don't know if there's any other things (...) As they're refugees or immigrants, so when you came to a different place or a different country, whatever, the system difference could put you in a position that's really stressful. So language barrier is a system difference. And a lot of changes in your life, different law, different environment, all these things." (IDI 6)*

### Summary

Many participants emphasized there is no one reason why people might try tobacco. The most mentioned factors were coping with the stressors of moving to a foreign country.

### Bottom Line

There is no one reason New Mainers might try tobacco. However, the most common reason cited by respondents was to cope with the stress of moving to a new country.

## Part 3: Demographics and Risk/Protective Factors

Q07. How do things like gender, religion, or culture impact tobacco use within your community?

### What they are saying:

*"I can see and I can hear the kids talking. Both of my daughters are in high school and I asked them about that and the problem is the attraction of the friends, and they're telling them 'try this and try that'. I'm one of the persons who's trying to show them why it's wrong, why it is not good." (IDI 1)*

*"Back home, the communities is very tight and small. So it would be like relatives, neighbors, people knows each other. So the culture is always there. Like shame on you, are you smoking? Shame on you, you're smoking in front of your dad or mom or whatever. But here, some families, they don't have any relatives or anything. Or those cultural rules or things, they are not exist as much as back home." (IDI 6)*

*"In my country, in my religion, they allowed only the old people to smoke. But for the... you can say 99%, the woman is not smoking, only the old women smoke, like 1% people... So, the more dangerous is the boy." (IDI 7)*

*A lot of the people we work with here, they come from tribal communities. They're very, very strict with gender. Like, let's say, when they do gatherings, the woman sits alone, man sits alone. And they do it accordingly. Definitely you see they use more higher with men compared to women. Like with males compared to females use. Again, add to that that possibility of the man going throughout gathering with other people. So, as I said, especially if these people, they allow smoking or using hookah, then you see more gatherings happening in these places." (IDI 8)*

### Summary

The most mentioned demographic divide was gender and age. Participants from Central African and Arabic communities reported tobacco is mostly used by men, and there are negative perceptions towards female use. Younger users are increasing their experimentation with electronic tobacco products and hookah regardless of gender.

### Bottom Line

The biggest impacts on tobacco use within immigrant communities were gender and age, according to respondents.

## Part 3: Demographics and Risk/Protective Factors

Q08. What attributes or conditions help protect people in your community from tobacco use?

### What they are saying:

*"I think there is always some protective around religion and culture, if it's taboo. I think that definitely helps kids. It's a good excuse." (IDI 2)*

*"As a Christian, when you go to the church they don't allow us to use the tobacco. They don't allow Christian to use those because it changes man, and you can do something very bad cause it touch in the brain. Sometimes it's not good. That's why, if we are going to the church, in our community most people are going to the church, and that's why we learn in church that you can't use that because of many incidents. That's why they can't try to use that and they are advised for that" (IDI 3)*

*"In Congo or Angola, most of people there are (...) Christian. In this fact, in the religion, that they do consider smoking as a sin. So that is why most of people do not like to smoke, but we see even people who do that. The reason why it's very rare to see a woman smoking, very, very, very rare, even 90 percent of girls here, they don't smoke, from the Congo or Angola. The reason behind that is because in our culture, smoking for a girl is sign of being a prostitute." (IDI 4)*

*"Depending on the traditions that they follow, again, different people have different habits. But a lot of them also cannot smoke in front of their elders. So let's say a child might not smoke in front of his father or his grandfather in respect for that person. And this is why you see same age gathering happening here and there. So let's say others would sit together, younger ones would sit together, and so on." (IDI 8)*

### Summary

Participants speaking for Arabic communities reported that individual family values and high-cost restrictions help protect the community from tobacco use. Leaders from Central African communities believed their culture's close-knit community and heavy emphasis on their unique religious tradition has kept tobacco use at a minimum.

### Bottom Line

Community values are the biggest help in protecting people from tobacco use.

## Part 4: Barriers

Q09. What limits your community's ability to offer tobacco use programs and treatment?

### What they are saying:

*"I think just having people to educate and inform them who speak their languages and understand their culture and can find them. Doing the work that I do, our newcomers are struggling to make it in our society. They're working really hard or they're struggling to find work. Their lives are hectic and just in terms of meeting the daily needs of food, shelter, and safety. It's hard to reach them and it's hard to find the right approach, find persons to give the message in a way that they'll understand and appreciate." (IDI 2)*

*"To be honest, even if you see somebody in my community do it (...) they do it to show off. They don't care about programs like that (...) They like to show off so they can get more noticeable in the eye of the other side of people, like the non-Middle Eastern. They want to go on and just show off that they care and they want to do something, and they want other people to hear their voice." (IDI 9)*

### Summary

Participants mentioned that people are overwhelmed with the challenges of immigrating to a new country and unable to seek treatment. Others said that tobacco use plays too important of a role in their culture to stop. Some leaders are offering programs and services despite these barriers.

### Bottom Line

The daily challenges of immigration and cultural acceptance of tobacco are the main challenges in offering programs and treatment.



## Part 4: Barriers

Q10. What prevents your community members from quitting or reducing their tobacco use?

### What they are saying:

*"People don't have access to free and easy substance abuse reduction programs that really are helping them deal with the behavior change that's needed for weaning them off the addiction of their services. I think that they have as much regular healthcare that might be weaning them or helping them (...). I think they bounce around a lot in the system so nobody's really paying a lot of attention" (IDI 2)*

*"I think that the Vietnamese community, they are often neglected when it comes to language access. They have some of the highest like incidences of having limited English proficiency and some of the lowest availability of interpretation and translation services, which is really, they're the seventh most widely spoken language in our community. And interpretation for them is almost never offered except for in our public schools and there are almost no translations of information available for them. So I think it's primarily about a language access thing. I don't think it's a part of like a cultural identity. I don't see that as much of a barrier." (IDI 5)*

*"In my very modest experience working with the community, there are people that are very, very educated. Very educated. But unfortunately, some areas where gender difference is there, is present. You can see in same family, a doctor and someone who does not even know how to read in Arabic (...) we always keep in mind these people in order to get the message across to them too, and not to exclude them in our messages." (IDI 8)*

*"They'll quit, because I've seen... and I interpret to pregnant women before that they're high risk, and they still smoke (...) But once they start having heart issues, cancer, then they quit, when it's too late. So sickness." (IDI 9)*

## Summary

There are many factors that preventing new immigrant communities from reducing tobacco use. In some cases, it may be that tobacco is used as a coping method to deal with the challenges of moving to a new country. Others said community members face language barriers when trying to access affordable services.

## Bottom Line

The barriers New Mainers encounter during the immigration process make it challenging to quit or reduce their tobacco use.

## Part 4: Barriers

Q11. What may help community members who are interested in quitting or reducing their tobacco use find the help they need?

### What they are saying:

*"I think they would need to figure out ways to find people where they are and do short educational segments with folks. I think sometimes in public health we try to do too much at once. I think it's short little segments of information because that's really what they can understand and grasp at a time. I don't think brochures and flyers are really effective. I do notice that most of our immigrants utilize TV stations that are in their languages, so I don't know how we get messaging through that. I also think if you use the religious community, the religious leaders, and ask them, they would probably have the best idea." (IDI 2)*

*"Sending people video about tobacco, sharing the story of people who used to smoke, but stop it. Showing the effect of smoking. How it destroy peoples body. Actually, that would be something useful. And to do it in a language that they do speak." (IDI 4)*

*"Maybe Greater Portland Clinic or such type of clinics, they should have a program. If they cannot make it for free, they still can make it affordable if you have insurance or not. If you have, of course your insurance will pay, especially for such a program." (IDI 6)*

*"Brochures or meetings, sometimes it will be help a lot, especially for the young people." (IDI 7)*

### Summary

Some participants felt that nothing could be done to generate interest in their community to reduce tobacco use. On the other hand, the most suggested ways to help people who are interested in quitting included distributing free literature and educational media such as popular TV channels within different communities.

### Bottom Line

Although it might be challenging, distributing information through free and popular media platforms may help people connect to resources.

## Part 5: Culturally Specific Services

*Q12. The city is hoping to create programs and information that will speak specifically to people in your community and be understood by individuals with a similar cultural experience. What do you think about culturally specific tobacco control programs? Do you think these could help community members with tobacco education and quitting services?*

### What they are saying:

*“When you have culturally specific programs or a program that's just for the Latinx population or just for this population, you kind of foster this like us versus them scenario. And public health is not us versus them. It's all of us (...) As the city of Portland plots and plans to have these kinds of intervention opportunities, like how can we bridge communities together instead of divide them apart?” (IDI 5)*

*“If there's like a serious program, or something affordable, or easy to reach, or simple thing, I think there is a lot of people they are trying actually to give up. Or they tried. I know some people, they've tried so many times and failed. So if there was such a program, or any kind of support, or any idea, like affordable one, a lot of them, they will be ready actually to try.” (IDI 6)*

*“I would love, to collaborate on, not only giving this information, but maybe really set the stage for people that are looking into quitting, or they accept with us to quit, is for us to navigate that with them and help them really succeed in quitting.” (IDI 8)*

### Summary

While leaders cautioned the importance of being mindful of ‘Us vs. Them’ narratives, many believed that culturally specific programs would be beneficial. There was a significant interest in leaders to collaborate with the city of Portland to accomplish this.

### Bottom Line

Collaboration with the City of Portland to create culturally specific tobacco programs would be beneficial.

## Part 5: Culturally Specific Services

Q13. What would a culturally specific tobacco education program or service look like for your community?

### What they are saying:

*"To create the meeting, puts it in the news, you going to have something to put on Facebook because we have friends and we have some groups, WhatsApp groups." (IDI 3)*

*"I think that the more you can make them cultural or language specific, the better impact you'll have, but I think you have to find people from those communities to help you lead that and figure out what is the messaging that's going to work in this community." (IDI 2)*

*"I found this woman that used to (...) set up the space as a bedroom of a child. And she put in different kind of drugs, or similar. Let's say, if it's heroin, she put powder, it wasn't heroin, but she named them. And then parents went through the room. Parents tried to discover where the child can hide, how they can look, what they can use. And then parents were amazed by this training, because they were able to see it, to touch it. So let's say, if I'm person who never went to school. Who I'm too ashamed to ask a question, in case there are other people. Even if I did not understand, I'm not going to ask that question. However, by putting that in a way that it's like a play, like a real life, or pretend play, or whatever you want to call it. They were able to go and say, "Oh my gosh, I cannot believe that this CD can be used for that or this or that." And they were talking about it for at least two months after we did the workshop." (IDI 8)*

### Summary

Many felt that a language specific program would be a key factor to creating culturally specific tobacco programs.

Others emphasized the importance of keeping the teaching format accessible to people from all backgrounds i.e people unable to read, adults, children.

### Bottom Line

Language-specific programs that are easily accessible to community members are key to creating culturally specific tobacco services.

## Part 5: Culturally Specific Services

Q14. What additional tools or assistance would be helpful to improve tobacco treatment for members of your community?

### What they are saying:

*"I think you would have to have tobacco programs in language specific groups. You would have to have them at various times and places that are more accessible to immigrant populations. We do a lot of Friday evening events because most of our immigrants don't have the schedules that many of our middle class families have. To find them either in the morning for people who work the second shift or the afternoon for the people who work the first shift. You have to kind of be pretty flexible." (IDI 2)*

*"If people are interested in reducing or quitting, mental health services can go a long way towards that. And we do have a lot of ethnic based community owned mental health service organizations here that could be a really useful partner in this kind of work, specifically Gateway Community Services comes to mind. And I also wonder about like not everyone has access to health insurance the same way, or an FSA account. And I think that nicotine patches or Nicorette gum could be covered by an FSA. And so is there an opportunity to teach people about what an FSA is, how they could get it through most employers, and how they could use it? I think that that could be a real opportunity as well because it, yeah, not everyone has access to insurance, to great insurance, but many people are workers and they would be eligible for an FSA, which could help them offset the cost of some of those prevention tools." (IDI 5)*

### Summary

Participants felt that catering events to specific community's schedules, increasing access to mental health services and medications, and programs to quit tobacco use through public outreach and through employment.

### Bottom Line

Increasing the amount and access to health resources and integrating tobacco education into programs will help improve tobacco treatment within communities.

## Part 5: Culturally Specific Services

Q15. What is the best way to keep your community informed about new services?

### What they are saying:

*"If we have meeting in the community. And sometimes we can call them with something to eat because you know everybody is working. To meet them, it is hard. Just to say we have any party, something, we going to eat together and when they will come, can communicate." (IDI 3)*

*"I think going to churches will be something good. Also, joining general assistance, because a lot of people go to general assistance. Asking to general assistance to organize trainings or workshop with people." (IDI 4)*

*"We really welcome being part of this, because this is something that we always try to emphasize on. Especially issues and things that might be jeopardizing the health of people. Usually what we do, we have most of the people that we serve, they use wifi. Their phones do not work if there is no wifi. So what we do is that we created groups on Fiber and WhatsApp. These are two free applications, and we have all members that we serve on either or, or both. And what we do when we need to do an event, or to invite them to something, or share an important information. Or even, let's say, with the stimulus checks or whatever. Something important that they can benefit from, we share it on these groups. And it goes to everyone that we serve. So it goes to around 1,200 members." (IDI 8)*

### Summary

The best way to continue communication with immigrant communities according to leaders were to work with religious leaders and through social media platforms. Some mentioned that meetings would be helpful if they are successfully organized.

### Bottom Line

Working with community leaders and continuing to distribute information on tobacco will help keep communities informed of services.



## Part 5: Culturally Specific Services

*Q16. We're looking for ways to make sure programs, treatment and discussion about these topics doesn't just go away. What are ways to continue a tobacco treatment discussion within the community?*

### What they are saying:

*"I think that was really helpful to give kids a chance, especially newcomers (...) a chance to ask their questions and get their questions answered. They'll bring it home. Kids will bring it home. It was always the young kids who always shamed the adults who smoked in their life, at least when I was a young person. We knew the hazards. We were taught that stuff in school, I just think that we've missed the boat. Certainly when my kids were teenagers, the adults were not aware of this vape soon enough to have an impact. It kind of snuck in the backdoor and all of a sudden the kids were all using it." (IDI 2)*

*"I'm wondering if there's a way to integrate it into other existing services and programs. So like when people are learning about other resources, they're also getting a plug for like, so I think if you had the star of the show is tobacco prevention, you might not get as many people interested as if the star of the show was tenant rights. And then you could include tobacco prevention as a part of it, because it does kind of tie in with the rights and responsibilities of tenants." (IDI 5)*

*"Have kind of programs, or brochures, or any type of something they can see it, you know?" (IDI 6)*

### Summary

Participants said that continuing to reach out to younger demographics and recent arrivals, integrating more tobacco awareness initiatives into already existing programs keep these efforts sustainable.

### Bottom Line

Including tobacco education into already existing programs and continuing outreach to new arrivals and younger demographics will help continue discussions about tobacco prevention.

## Part 5: Culturally Specific Services

*Q17. What is the best approach to reach out to your community members about these topics? Some examples are online focus groups, in-person focus groups, or individual interviews.*

### What they are saying:

*"Sometimes even in the church you can even talk to in the church because 80% of my community, they are going to the church. And we know the pastors can just talk, just ask to talk about that anytime in the church Sunday." (IDI 3)*

*"We've found during parent teacher conference, what works best, Google Meet allows you to use a phone to call in. So, if a family didn't have a device like a laptop, but they have a phone, you could call them through the Google Meets and engage with them that way. That worked (...) A lot of families don't have data plans because of the cost, but that's why we use WhatsApp all the time with families." (IDI 2)*

*"I'm not sure if you have workshops through the organization for us to benefit from, or to partner with you guys to offer some for our participants that you're working with." (IDI 8)*

### Summary

Participants said the best way to reach out to communities is by meeting them where they normally gather, such as churches, mosques, bodegas, or schools. Some participants said that offering online meetings will help increase access as well. There was an interest from some leaders to partner with the city.

### Bottom Line

Having a presence in popular community gathering places and offering virtual meetings is the best way to reach the community.

## Key Findings – Community Leader Interviews

### ❖ Social norms are important in informing tobacco use, in the views of community leaders.

- Tobacco use was cited by community leaders as a way for new arrivals to grow social bonds and relieve stress.
- Helping create social ties outside the context of tobacco use was seen as an important way to prevent new use, though leaders did not seem to believe that tobacco use changed significantly upon arrival.
- Stress relief was seen as a major driver of tobacco use. Minimizing the stress of coming to Portland could help address some tobacco use and make it easier for current users to quit.

### ❖ Meet New Mainers where they are.

- Community leaders stressed that programs and education material should be incorporated into existing programs and sources of information. The need to go to another place or participate in another new program could be a barrier to access services.
- Community leaders were also aware that cost could prevent New Mainers from participating - an emphasis was put on these communities being filled with working people for whom costs could present a major barrier.

### ❖ Combine cultural specificity with community outreach.

- Community leaders cited an important balance – for programs and educational materials specific to their communities that were not othering. The City should carefully monitor programs and educational materials to show that reducing tobacco use is part of being a Mainer, not that there is something wrong or other about their cultural norms.



# Findings:

## *Spanish-Speaking Community Focus Group*



## Part 1: Intro Activity

Let's start the discussion with an activity. I am going to show you two different images. Please share what immediately comes to mind after I share each picture.

### What they are saying:

*"It's a bad habit, I think everybody all knows this. How dangerous could be have the habit in their life. (...) I got one Asian person working with me, he's about 72 years old man. I think he weigh around 110 pounds, he's a skinny guy. And every day I ask him, I say, "Hey, are you ready to quit?" Because, he smoke a lot. He go outside the work, smoking every, I'd say every half hour." (Participant 1)*

*"First, when somebody is doing that just in front of me or around me, and sometimes people they just ask, "Do you mind if I do this?" Well, how you can say no? I mean, they like to do it, they do it. And also it remind me that couple years ago, maybe more, I saw a picture (...) One from the person who smoke and one from another person who is healthy, and I was surprised about how it looks. And always when I see somebody smoking, what I think is always cancer." (Participant 2)*

*"I heard a lot of stuff for the news at TV and commercials, explain that this kind of fun is not anything going to provoke any health problems on. I heard news too, that it's too dangerous for people doing that for the flavor, it's addictive stuff for people and can being a big health problem long and doing the practice." (Participant 1)*

*"It just made me think about those people who feel like proud of when they are smoking. They just do it in front of people like... and they feel proud of what they do and even it is something, unhealthy for them, but that's what I think. And maybe things about all the ways that now people can smoke different ways, different forms." (Participant 2)*

## Summary

Participants thought about the dangers of tobacco use and the discomfort they've felt when wanting to speaking out against tobacco use in social situations.

## Bottom Line

The images shown during the focus group made participants think of negative effects of tobacco use in people's lives.

## Part 2: Experience with Tobacco in your Community

How do you feel about tobacco products in general?

### What they are saying:

*"I never been a smoker, but in my country, I never smoke before come over here. Well, I didn't smoke here either, but I got a couple friends. They take me to fishing up north the summer and I see a thousand mosquitoes around me. And the better thing the guy told me say, "Oh, make it smoke to them. They got to go away from you." (...) I think it a couple time, the time I did it was for maybe curious fun." (Participant 1)*

*"I notice on some people how they smell because they smoke too much. I mean, even if they are not smoking, you feel when they breathe and even in the body, I'll say that. And that's why I was saying, if I smoke, this is how I'm going to be, smelling so weird or smelling like tobacco. So I really didn't want to try it again just because I try it when I came here the first years. And so I noticed the flavors they have. Now they have flavors and all that." (Participant 2)*

*"I really like to understand why the people light up the cigarette and in all the smokes and letting go out. I say, what is that reason? What is the fun this? What is the thing to make you do it? And they say... I ask couple questions and say, "Why and what is the benefit? What is the benefit and why doing this?" If I find a good reason, probably I do it, but I don't think smoke in, take it out and smoke out, burning the money, burning nothing, don't make any sense." (Participant 1)*

*"For me, it doesn't make sense, just as Speaker 1 was saying, just taking smoke and putting it out. I mean, it's just nothing, but I always think about those people who really smell." (Participant 2)*

### Summary

Both participants had experimented with tobacco use in the past. They agreed they didn't understand the appeal of tobacco use or how it can become addicting.

### Bottom Line

Tobacco education is also important for community members who do not use tobacco products. It may help with understanding the complexity of addiction and the reasons why people continue to use tobacco.



## Part 2: Experience with Tobacco in your Community

What leads people in your community to try tobacco products?

### What they are saying:

*"I believe there's many people in our community, they come alone. They don't come with the family. We're lucky we are living with family and a wife, kid, and we got a... But many people, specifically men, they come with no family at all. Probably, they don't feel the pressure, the need to smoke. But I mean, they got into the group, into the friend with people they just met. They feel like want to be accepted into the friendship or whatever, and they start to do it like this. And they never did over there. They see their family, don't see them in here, and should be a factor, being lonely, not lonely, but lonely with no family around here." (Participant 1)*

*"I think that maybe some people will feel like they had to do it just to feel part of that group or that friends or those people. And maybe, sometimes people feel that they had to do it just to be part of that group." (Participant 2)*

### Summary

Participants mentioned that many people who try tobacco arrive to Maine without a support network. They might try tobacco for the social aspect, or because they have the freedom to try new things.

### Bottom Line

Peer pressure, curiosity, and living in a new place without a support system are all risk factors for tobacco use.

## Part 3: Acculturation

When your community members first move to Cumberland County, how does their tobacco use change?

### What they are saying:

*"it's very addictive for the people who practice. I feeling that with the people drinking today is drinking a couple beers. Maybe in six month, they're drinking a 12 pack. They increasing the amount of thing they doing. And I believe they doing the same thing with the tobacco, because I think it is more smoking to their life" (Participant 1)*

*"I think that single people is doing it more. Or maybe, from my experience knowing some people who smoke, they try to quit or do less, especially when they start getting a family, when they get a girlfriend. I think in our community, the women, they don't smoke that much as they do here, Americans. So it's easy or it's not hard to find a couple, husband and wife, smoking together. I mean, both smoke. But I think from our community, I mean maybe there will be some ladies who smoke, but it's not something they do, I think so. So maybe that's when some guys decide to maybe do it less or quit, just because they don't want to be in that type of fight every day or when they see they smoking" (Participant 2)*

*"I really was surprised how much people from this country smoke (...) It's too much. Maybe in our countries, it was kind of different because now the culture from North America, I mean from the United States, is going to our countries, is getting there. So people just start doing the same thing, smoking. So maybe before it was something about culture, but now it's not. It's not that. It's not even religion. People is just doing what they see or what people do." (Participant 2)*

### Summary

Both participants felt that the addictive qualities of tobacco and people lacking a close support system might increase their tobacco use within their community.

### Bottom Line

Having a support system and education about tobacco addiction is important for new community members.

## Part 3: Acculturation

How do things like gender, religion, or culture impact tobacco use?

### What they are saying:

*"I don't think it is nothing to be with the religion or anything to tradition, nothing to do with it. I think it's, in general, people who don't respect themselves, they're going to be smoker." (Participant 1)*

*"It has to be something with the culture too like when I came to the United States, I was surprised how much people smoke here. They smoke a lot. Maybe now it's kind of different in our countries too." (Participant 2)*

*"it is a lot of more freedom because maybe in our countries before ... I know now it is different. If a parent see one of their children smoking, you need to be prepared. Especially if they don't smoke or drink, they need to be prepared. So that is something we don't see in parents here in United States that when they are adults or just getting a job and making their own money, they can do whatever they want. I mean they cannot even control their children or something like that. But I think that's part of the ... is the freedom they have here." (Participant 2)*

### Summary

Participants felt that cultural influence affects New Mainers tobacco use the most. They agreed that it is important for families and loved ones to be able to educate themselves on tobacco use to help reduce their community's risk for picking up tobacco use.

### Bottom Line

Cultural influence is one of the biggest factors impacting tobacco use for New Mainers.

## Part 3: Acculturation

What protects people in your community from tobacco use?

### What they are saying:

*"Maybe the people that got a family, if the people respect for people, they got a kid, "I don't want to smoke in front of the kid" or "I don't want to smoke in front of my own kid or in my house or in my car." Just thing like that, but I think they are more... I mean a fact that single people, even women and men, because over here pretty close to same, I mean woman and men still got to have it, and probably the single should be a good reason for start to do it because they don't have anybody." (Participant 1)*

*"Even if they are married, if they are 20, 25, 28 or 30 year old man or if he's single, I'm happy to have him in the house. But in here, I heard even the Spanish people growing here or born here from Spanish families born in here, they always say, "Okay, I get 18. I can do my life. I can go out and I can do whatever I want." But in our community, really in our community, that don't happen in here because we take care of the kid. Even if they are older, 20, no matter if they 18, that don't make any difference ... 18, 19, 20 don't make any difference for us. We still take care of them. If we see them doing something, we still are the parents and I mean no matter if he's 18. But in here, like I say, a little bit more different. I heard about a lot of kids saying, "I'm going to get 18 in two months. I be out of my house" or "I walk away. I want my life." And as soon they got out living friends because they get 18, they move out of the house. I don't understand the reason. They move out of the parents' house to live with friends and they going to start the bad life." (Participant 1)*

### Summary

Participants talked about how parenting styles play a big role in their communities. Children will usually stay close to their parents until they get married. Participants felt close knit families will stop each other from using tobacco out of mutual respect.

### Bottom Line

The structure of families of a community/Latino communities in Maine can help protect members from tobacco use.

## Part 4: Barriers

*What limits your community's ability to offer tobacco use programs and treatment?*

### What they are saying:

*"Maybe at some point they get that crew who can put the community or some people together, starting little by little, and educating and explaining them the problem they going to have. Just talking about the economy right now is bad. We don't want to have a hundred dollars to spending on tobacco in one week when we spending for grocery for the house or especially paying medication bills for being involved in illness for tobacco." (Participant 1)*

*"One of the challenge people has now or the challenge we face is time because it's something what we've been seeing on people. I mean people, especially in our community, they are working. Sometimes they have long hours and people when they come back home, they don't want to do something else than maybe just rest, eat, rest and do what they have to do at home or something like that." (Participant 2)*

*"I don't think we got anything, anything that I see to prevent or help or maybe support the people. I don't see any program in our community directly helping or trying to help the people who don't smoke." (Participant 1)*

### Summary

Participants said there are no programs in their community for tobacco education. They agreed their community is preoccupied with work and other tasks.

### Bottom Line

The main challenges of creating more services is a lack of knowledge about programs and availability.

## Part 4: Barriers

What prevents people from quitting or reducing their tobacco use?

### What they are saying:

*"I know from the experience from church that people who attend the meetings we do at church from church things, it's just because they want to do it. They like it. They love it. That why they go. But we've been inviting people to attend some of the things we do at church, but some people they don't have interest. So it's easy to find an excuse to not go but it's just how much information we have available for people." (Participant 2)*

*"If we got a place to talk about this or maybe even it should be a volunteer about this because I know there could be if one day we get something like that, I mean you don't mind be a volunteer for helping this." (Participant 1)*

*"It's just finding the time to do it and to see if they attend and I don't know how much ... Honestly, I don't know how many programs are there in Spanish or who is promoting those programs, who is talking about tobacco. As I said, it has a lot of to do the way we put things out there for people because we need to be thinking about different groups, like people who has no time to go or because they cannot or they don't drive." (Participant 2)*

### Summary

Scheduling conflicts, transportation issues, and an interest in tobacco education make it difficult for community members to quit or reduce their use.

### Bottom Line

Many factors play a part in a person's decision to reduce or quit tobacco. It is important to cater treatment individually and listen to what they need.



## Part 5: Future Services

The city of Portland is hoping to create programs and information that will speak specifically to people in your community. What do you think about this idea?

### What they are saying:

*"The city should maybe do more about getting info in Spanish out there. We know there is some type of problems and maybe organizations who are available for that. But I don't know how much is that in Spanish, but I think the city should be taking or trying everything. I will say, not only just printing something, just videotaping, doing some type of videos. But the thing is, how they can promote that in the local channels. How they will do that? How they will put that info out there? I think that's really hard." (Participant 2)*

*"Maybe it's time for start to looking for another way to do it. Maybe we're missing a way. Because the first thing they say, "Okay, we're going to invite people to any place and we talk about this thing." But maybe it's not the way they want to hear that. Maybe we want to say the same thing in a different way or another. Well, maybe it's not okay, say a [inaudible]. But try to convince them to be there, to assist or get help. Because remember the first thing, somebody going to be agree to go for help, that's when they want to change." (Participant 1)*

*"If you ask them for something, you need to give something. Well, I say that. The respond is better, you know? And I think that's one of the best way to get people there. Just say, we're going to do this. Or we're going to give you this, or we're going to have food or something like that." (Participant 2)*

### Summary

Participants agreed that creating community specific tobacco programs will be a challenge. Listening to what community members need and brainstorming new ways to reach them is critical.

### Bottom Line

Finding new avenues to reach community members and offering resources in native languages will benefit these programs.

## Part 5: Future Services

*What additional tools or assistance would be helpful to improve tobacco treatment for members of your community?*

### What they are saying:

*"The first thing is, work with the people close to them. I don't know what way should be. Before get into the team, because some people don't want to help. Like I said, they don't want to hear about it. If they don't know this vulnerability from them to change or leave aside that behavior or quit, the first thing is going to be there and say, 'I want to change and accept help.'" (Participant 1)*

*"Things start when you have a good relation with somebody. But I think, because as Speaker 1 was saying, people won't attend when we say, "We have a meeting about tobacco." They won't attend just because in their minds will be, if I go, I'm saying I'm a smoker, or I use tobacco. And some people, they don't want people to know that, but maybe that's the hard part. Recognizing that I had the problem with tobacco, I need help. So the challenge is how we can make people conscious of that." (Participant 2)*

*"I think that the first person who somebody who want to quit will tell, is that person who they maybe trust or that person who they think can somehow can help or will help them." (Participant 2)*

### Summary

Participants suggested building positive relationships with people seeking tobacco treatment and their support network will improve tobacco treatment programs.

### Bottom Line

Creating reliable and trustworthy support systems and relationships with community members is the first step to help those in need of tobacco treatment.

## Part 5: Future Services

What is the best way to keep your community informed about new services?

### What they are saying:

*"I know it's a lot of people out there that need help. I know it's a lot of people over there that need help. Community, our community. Maybe they don't looking for help, but they need help." (Participant 1)*

*"Hopefully, the city or the organizations, they are not going to get tired of trying and trying and trying. Because that happened in my environment where I work, is just sometimes you get frustrated just because people don't respond or they don't take the time for something. What is good for them. It's sad but I think those are the challenge. So I'm really thankful for you to taking time for doing this." (Participant 2)*

*"We need to work in that part and looking for little bit more help before get people in and talk about tobacco problem. Talking about looking for the people who want to change and start with them. A little bit closer." (Participant 1)*

### Summary

While participants acknowledged the challenge of providing tobacco services, they emphasized the importance of persistence when offering resources. They felt that there are many who need help, and finding innovative ways to reach out would be the first step.

### Bottom Line

There are many people in need of tobacco services. Finding new ways to reach out to them is the first step to successfully incorporating tobacco services into communities.

## Key Findings – Spanish-Speaking Focus Group

### ❖ Focus group participants focused on the need to work within communities to reach individuals.

- Participants cited that tobacco use could be a social event, a way for New Mainers to grow closer to others in their community. Peer groups and social occasions, even minor breaks at work, could drive tobacco use.
- When thinking of ways to help their communities, participants discussed a need to work through social networks and have trusted sources reach out to people.
- Participants never emphasized the need for expert information or sources of authority.

### ❖ Tobacco education, even among those who don't use tobacco, is important to building a culture of protective factors.

- Support from peers and family was seen as an important method to help those trying to quit tobacco use. Participants talked about a need to help provide information even to those who don't use tobacco so that they can work with users.
- Participants cited a lack of materials in their native language, which reduced the potential effectiveness of campaigns.

## Closing

*I'd like to go around to everyone and collect your final thoughts.*

*"I know it's a lot of people over there that need help. Community, our community. Maybe they don't looking for help, but they need help. I think the challenge should be, find a way to get to there to help them. Find the right way to do it."  
(Participant 1)*

"I think the challenge should be, find a way to get to there to help them. Find the right way to do it. And this is the thing is come to my mind right now."  
(Participant 1)

"I'm glad there is people who is thinking about how to help our community in this tobacco problems." (Participant 2)



# Findings: *Online Surveys*





## Detailed and Key Findings: Online Survey

Image1: What comes to mind when you see the above image?

### What they are saying:

*"Smoke Fire 🔥"*

*"Relief"*

*"Health concern"*

*"Gross"*

*"Cigarette addiction"*

*"A smoker"*

*"Cancer"*

*"He is causing damage to his lungs"*

*"Become sick, pollution, lung and gum cancer"*

*"Another smoker"*



### Summary

Participants described the image of a person smoking a cigarette as gross and a health concern.

## Detailed and Key Findings: Online Survey

Image2: What comes to mind when you see the above image?

### What they are saying:

*"Shisha."*

*"Gross."*

*"Health concern x 2."*

*"Gross."*

*"Vapor addiction."*

*"An addicted smoker."*

*"Cancer."*

*"Bad habit. Not healthy."*

*"A social smoker, a potential smoker, a smoker that ignores he is."*



### Summary

When asked what comes to mind when shown an image of a person vaping, participants described it as gross, a bad habit, and a health concern.

## Detailed and Key Findings: Online Survey

*Tobacco1: How do you feel about tobacco products (cigarettes, cigars, vaping devices, or chew) in general?*

### What they are saying:

*"Very good for distraction."*

*"Cigarettes are okay, the rest are gross."*

*"Hate all that stuff. Can't be next to someone that smoke any of these products, because I care for my health."*

*"Gross."*

*"Harmful to health."*

*"I am against it as it's destroying the body once addicted."*

*"Hate it all."*

*"Don't like even the smell of tobacco products. I hope my kids never smoke, I grow in a nonsmoking household and my husband doesn't smoke, so I hope my kids will do the same."*

*"Not a fan but I can tolerate."*

### Summary

In general, participants have negative opinions on tobacco products, describing them as, gross and harmful to one's health.

## Detailed and Key Findings: Online Survey

*Tobacco2: What leads people in your community to try tobacco products?*

### **What they are saying:**

*"Other they are smoking too much other refuse to smoke."*

*"The desire for stress relief."*

*"Advertisement."*

*"Not my friends."*

*"Peers and sometimes stressful events."*

*"Friends and the environment where the person is close to."*

*"Stress or they younger folks think its cool and hip."*

*"Mostly their peers."*

*"Curiosity, social environment, ego."*

### **Summary**

Participants attribute peers and stress relief as reasons why New Mainers to try tobacco products.

## Detailed and Key Findings: Online Survey

*Tobacco3: When people in your community first move to Cumberland County, how does their tobacco use change?*

### What they are saying:

*"They look where they can find tobacco, and they are afraid of deportation, not sure."*

*"Don't know as I'm not a smoker."*

*"They smoked more."*

*"No really changes, may be lack of income was a challenge to have access to tobacco in my community, people are not smoking much as in the country where I am from smoking it's less used."*

*"I don't know."*

*"I think it stays the same."*

*"I wouldn't know."*

### Summary

Most participants agreed that when their community members move to Cumberland County, their tobacco use mostly stays the same. One participant stated that community members smoke more now.

## Detailed and Key Findings: Online Survey

*Intersect01: How do things like gender, religion, or culture impact tobacco use?*

### What they are saying:

*"People may hide their use because they feel ashamed about it."*

*"Gender and culture might impact but not religion. My religion is not in favor of smoking."*

*"More women smoke."*

*"In my community there are more male smokers than female, maybe no female smokes. A lot of Christian churches prohibit cigarette smoking and, in my community, someone who smokes is less trusted than a nonsmoker."*

*"Where I am coming from, women are not smoking (or less smoking) and according to the religion, Christians are not supposed to smoke."*

*"Unsure."*

*"In our community men are usually the smokers in the family and it is very common for men to smoke in our culture."*

*"I do not think there is an impact. As a Muslim smoking is better than drinking, for example. So smoking is what we can escape with. The good sin."*

### Summary

Men are usually the smokers in the family, since women are not supposed to smoke. Christians prohibit smoking whereas Muslims perceive smoking as better than drinking, thus may smoke more.

### Bottom Line

Culture and religion play a large impact on whether someone uses tobacco products within New Mainer communities.



## Detailed and Key Findings: Online Survey

Protect01: What protects people in your community from tobacco use?

### What they are saying:

*"Sometimes the high cost."*

*"Awareness of the dangerous of smoking as it impact health directly relaxes them."*

*"Cultural norms."*

*"The religion and the family background also impacts people ways of living or doing lack of money."*

*"Cigarettes and now vaping is becoming popular among the younger generation."*

*"Sports."*

### Summary

Participants believe that awareness, high cost, religion, and peers have an impact on protecting people within their community from using tobacco.

### Bottom Line

Cultural norms, cost, and sense of community protect people from tobacco use.

## Detailed and Key Findings: Online Survey

*Protect02: What limitations or challenges does your community face when trying to receive tobacco education, treatment aimed at quitting tobacco, or other tobacco-related needs?*

### What they are saying:

*"Lack of information sources, lack of resources for quitting."*

*"Don't think there is any limitations to receive education but its more like a personal choice."*

*"Language."*

*"Clear understanding of the benefit of quitting tobacco, and the language barrier with the education."*

*"I have no idea as I am not among those people who are trying treatment or education to quit tobacco."*

*"They probably don't know how to read."*

*"The language barrier and mostly parents not recognizing what the vaping devices are when they see it in their kids' rooms for example."*

*"I'm not sure there is enough campaign around it. Vaping is the watching. It doesn't harm."*

### Summary

Lack of information, resources, language barriers, and lack of awareness campaigns pose as challenges for New Mainer communities.

### Bottom Line

Tobacco education, treatment aimed at quitting tobacco, and other tobacco-related needs should be accessible to all languages and comprehension levels. There are opportunities to create more awareness campaigns and educational materials for the immigrant population of Cumberland County.

## Detailed and Key Findings: Online Survey

Protect03: What prevents people from quitting or reducing their tobacco use?

### What they are saying:

*"Stress, lack of support, too busy worrying about other things."*

*"Addiction, some smoke to cope with problems."*

*"Stress."*

*"Good motivation."*

*"In general, once someone is addicted to something, it's not easy to stop. If tobacco is very accessible (price) the person will always be tempted to continue addiction."*

*"The addiction to tobacco, I think, and not having enough support from family and friends."*

*"Adding a new habit. That's about it."*

### Summary

Participants agreed that stress, lack of support, and addiction to tobacco all prevent people from quitting or reducing their tobacco use.

## Detailed and Key Findings: Online Survey

*Portland01: The City of Portland is hoping to create programs and information that will speak specifically to people in your community. What do you think about this idea?*

### What they are saying:

*"Especially having material in our languages would be good."*

*"Excellent idea."*

*"Good idea."*

*"Great idea. Start by identify those ones, explain the benefits of the program, get people interested in those programs."*

*"It's a great idea and will be helpful in order to save people from chronic diseases or death."*

*"Good idea."*

*"Great idea, make you have interpreters or better yet specialists who speak different languages."*

*"Make it funny."*

### Summary

Participants agreed that creating programs and information for people within the immigrant population of Portland is a great idea.

### Bottom Line

Creating more programs and information that targets specific people in the various immigrant communities is essential. Interpreters can be useful in creating these services.

## Detailed and Key Findings: Online Survey

*Portland02: What additional tools or assistance would be helpful to improve tobacco treatment for members of your community?*

### What they are saying:

*"Knowledge about what kinds of free support is available even if you don't have health insurance."*

*"Education about the risks of smoking."*

*"Education on dangers of smoking."*

*"Incentives to participants."*

*"In my community, education (information regarding the tobacco used, consequences( once addicted) is the primary key."*

*"Interpreters needed to help."*

*"Free ways and supplies and support groups to help them quit."*

*"A nonconscious activity would be appropriate. Being conscious to quit sometimes is too challenging."*

### Summary

Participants agreed that there needs to be more education on the dangers of smoking as well as cost-effective support systems to help their communities.

### Bottom Line

Interpreters and community health workers can be utilized as important tools to improving tobacco treatment for New Mainers.

## Detailed and Key Findings: Online Survey

*Portland03: What is the best way to keep your community informed about new services?*

### What they are saying:

*"Simple, short, attention-getting info shareable through WhatsApp."*

*"Flyers in local grocery shops, flyers given to patients when visiting hospitals."*

*"Community leaders."*

*"Through their PCP offices, General Assistance, DHHS, WIC and other services providing social services."*

*"By commercial, their primary care and by talking to their leaders keep language access available."*

*"Community health workers in ethnic community-based organizations and WhatsApp and social media in general."*

*"Advertising... billboard...use fear maybe."*

### Summary

Participants agreed that using community leaders, health workers, and other agencies are great places to keep their community informed about new services. WhatsApp could also be utilized to send short, informative messages to community members.

### Bottom Line

Utilizing multiple forms of outreach and services can help to streamline and inform New Mainers on tobacco.



## Key Findings – Web Survey

### ◆ The dangers of tobacco use are known to many community members

- Community member responses to images of tobacco products show an immediate understanding that tobacco use is dangerous. Respondents cited danger, pollution, and disease in reaction to both images of cigarettes and e-cig products.
- At least among respondents, the dangers of tobacco use seem well known. While this is important for anti-tobacco campaigns, focus may need to be placed on themes other than education about health risks.

### ◆ Tobacco is seen as a tool to cope with stress

- Community members point to cultural impacts of religion on smoking regularly- self-identified Christian New Mainers were more likely to see tobacco use as a sinful act, whereas Muslims said their communities view tobacco use as more acceptable than other substances such as alcohol. This may make tobacco products more popular in Muslim communities than they would otherwise be.
- Many individuals cited stress relief as a reason why people in their communities may use tobacco products. Resettling is a life altering event, and communities may need ways to help relieve some of the stress and pressure which is less dangerous than tobacco but remains readily available.
- This was also cited as important by community leaders who were interviewed. Programs may need to be designed to help counter the view that tobacco use is stress relieving.

### ◆ Community want information provided to them in ways that fit into their lives

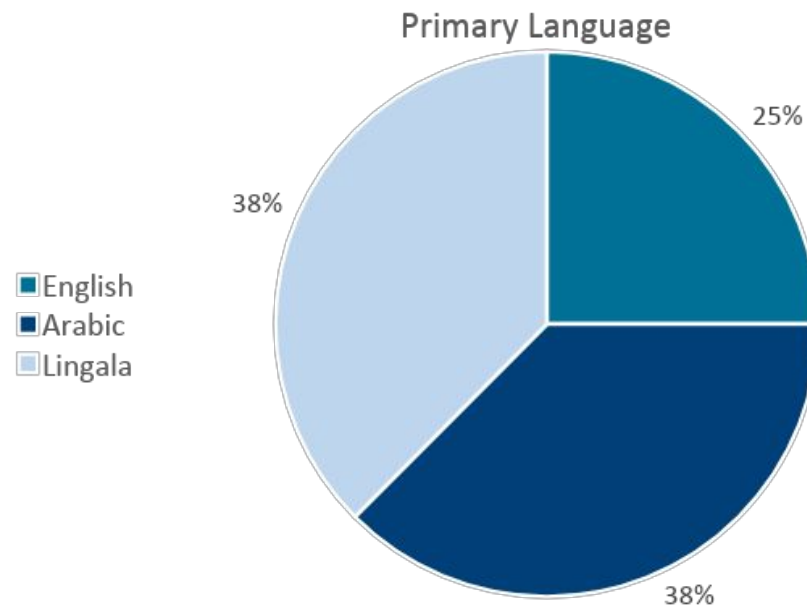
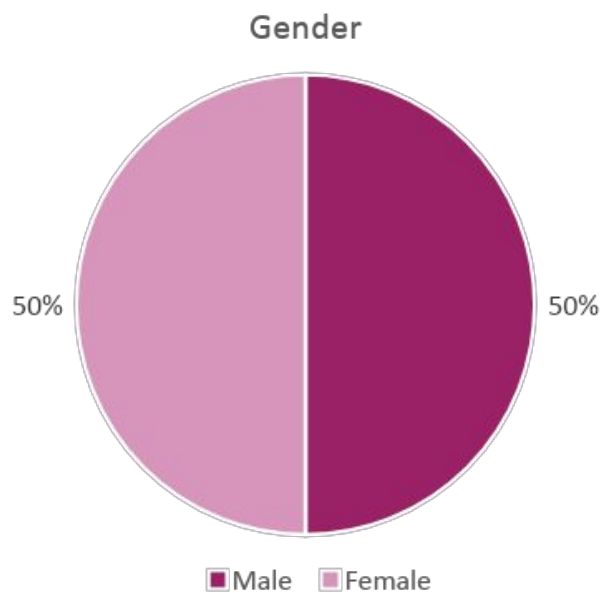
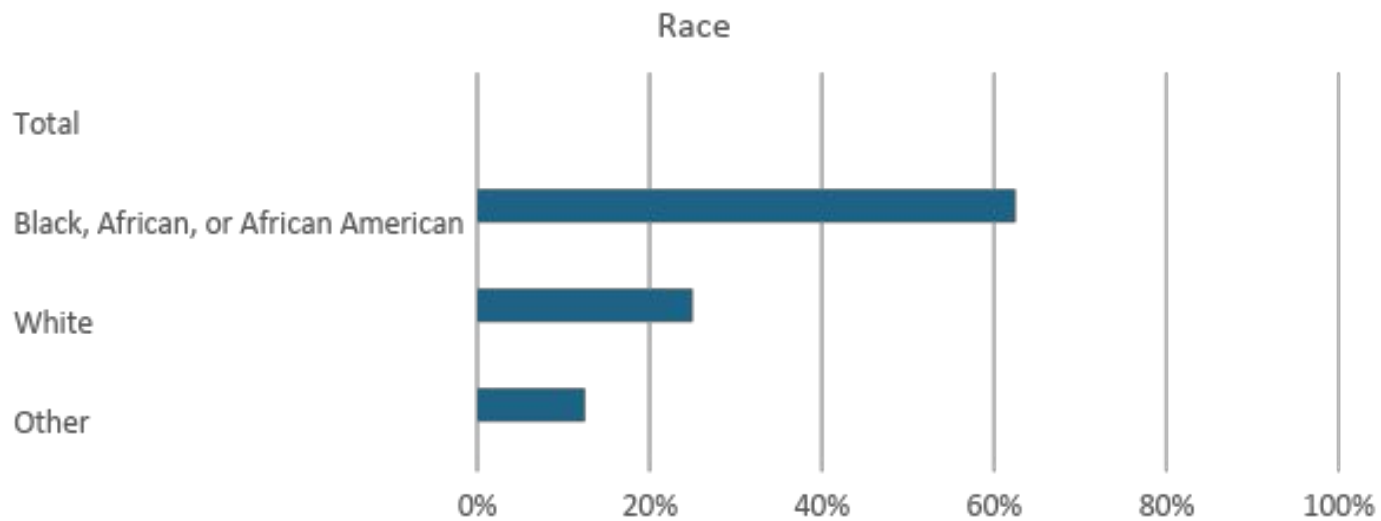
- Responses focused on the need for education and programs to be free or low cost- there was a focus on the need to work within these communities and an understanding that many people do not have additional resources to spend. Cost was seen as a barrier to potential enrollment.
- Respondents reported a low level of awareness of current programs to help people end tobacco use, educate about tobacco use, or prevent tobacco use among their communities.



# Demographics:

## *Online Surveys*





## Demographics:

*DEMO01A: Country of Origins*

| Country       | Count |
|---------------|-------|
| Congo Dem Rep | 1     |
| DRC Kinshasa  | 1     |
| El Salvador   | 1     |
| Gabon         | 1     |
| Iraq          | 1     |
| Sudan         | 1     |
| Syria         | 1     |



# Appendix



# Discussion Guide: *In-depth Interviews*

# Discussion Guide- In-depth Interviews

| Portland Immigrant Tobacco Use- IDIs |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Introduction                         | <p>Hello, my name is (introduce self). Thank you for your time and interest in this interview. I work for Market Decisions Research; an independent public health research firm and we are working with The City of Portland Public Health Division.</p> <p>We are conducting this interview to learn from community leaders like yourself. We want to know more about your community and the community's experience with tobacco, opinions of tobacco, and tobacco exposure. Your feedback is very important- it will help speak to your community's needs and help the City better understand.</p> <p>This interview is voluntary, and there are no right or wrong answers. Any information you provide will be confidential and the data will be reported in summary form only. You may also skip any question you do not want to answer. The interview should take no longer than 30 minutes to complete. You will receive a \$35 gift card after completing the interview as a thank you for your time.</p> <p>If it is ok with you, this interview will be recorded and transcribed so you can have my full attention. After the interviews have been completed and transcribed I will prepare a summary report for the City on what was said, but I won't report who said what. The recording will be deleted after the transcriptions are complete. The transcriptions will exclude any identifiable information. The recording won't be shared with anyone besides the project team for this research. No one at the City of Portland Public Health Division will be given this recording. Is it alright to record this session?</p> <p>IF CAMERA OFF: If you happen to have a camera, it would be great to have it on. Body language tells us when a participant has something to say, and other facial expressions are important. If you are unable to do this, that is absolutely fine.</p> <p>Great, Let's begin (start recording).</p> |



# Discussion Guide- In-depth Interviews

| Portland Immigrant Tobacco Use- IDIs     |   |
|--|---|
| Additional information (Read as needed): | <p>Will you keep my information private?<br/>Although the questions in this interview ask about your personal experiences, the information you give us is confidential; nothing said during this interview will ever be associated with you or anyone else by name.</p> <p>How was I selected to participate?<br/>We worked with the Portland Office of Minority Health to identify individuals they saw as community leaders.</p> <p>Will I receive an incentive?<br/>You will receive a \$35 gift card after completing the interview as a thank you for your time. This gift card will be processed and sent out by a company called Rybbon within 3-5 days.</p> <p>For more information about the study<br/>If you have any questions about this interview, please feel free to contact the Principal Investigator, Mark Noyes, at <a href="mailto:mnoyes@marketdecisions.com">mnoyes@marketdecisions.com</a> or by telephone at (207) 358-1719, extension 119.</p> |

# Discussion Guide- In-depth Interviews

| Portland Immigrant Tobacco Use- IDIs |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Experience                           | <p><b>Q01. Can you tell me about yourself, your community, and your role in the community?</b></p> <p>PROBE01: Tell me more about “topic”.</p> <p><b>Q02. We’re hoping to learn more about tobacco use. By tobacco use, I mean smoking cigarettes, vaping, chewing tobacco, or hookah smoking. What do you think about tobacco use in your community?</b></p> <p>PROBE02: What do community members think about tobacco use?</p> <p>PROBE03: What patterns have you noticed with tobacco use over the past few years?</p> <p><b>Q03. What leads people in your community to try tobacco?</b></p> <p>PROBE04: What are the reasons they continue to use tobacco?</p> |
| Acculturation                        | <p><b>Q04. When people in your community first move to Cumberland County, how does their tobacco use change?</b></p> <p>PROBE05: Tell me more about that.</p> <p><b>Q05: For New Mainers in your community, have you noticed more use, less use, or no change in tobacco use?</b></p> <p>PROBE06: What are the reasons for this?</p> <p><b>Q06. Are there any other motivations you think would drive new community members to start using tobacco for the first time?</b></p>  |

## Discussion Guide- In-depth Interviews

| Portland Immigrant Tobacco Use- IDIs             |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Demographics and Risk/Protective Factors:</b> | <p><b>Q07. How do things like gender, religion, or culture impact tobacco use within your community?</b></p> <p>PROBE07: Can you think of any other demographics that may affect tobacco use?</p> <p><b>Q08. What attributes or conditions help protect people in your community from tobacco use?</b></p>  |
| <b>Barriers:</b>                                 | <p><b>Q09. What limits your community's ability to offer tobacco use programs and treatment?</b></p> <p>PROBE08: Can you tell me more about "barrier mentioned"?</p> <p>PROBE09: What could help overcome this barrier?</p> <p>PROBE09a: What could the City of Portland do to help your community with this barrier?</p> <p><b>Q10. What prevents your community members from quitting or reducing their tobacco use?</b></p> <p><b>Q11. What may help community members who are interested in quitting or reducing their tobacco use find the help they need?</b></p> |

# Discussion Guide- In-depth Interviews

| Portland Immigrant Tobacco Use- IDIs |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Culturally Specific Services:        | <p><b>Q12. The city is hoping to create programs and information that will speak specifically to people in your community and be understood by individuals with a similar cultural experience. What do you think about culturally specific tobacco control programs? Do you think these could help community members with tobacco education and quitting services?</b></p> <p>PROBE10: Are you aware of any culturally specific programs currently?</p> <p><b>Q13. What would a culturally specific tobacco education program or service look like for your community?</b></p> <p><b>Q14. What additional tools or assistance would be helpful to improve tobacco treatment for members of your community?</b></p> <p>PROBE11: How would these tools or assistance help?</p> <p><b>Q15. What is the best way to keep your community informed about new services?</b></p> <p><b>Q16. We're looking for ways to make sure programs, treatment and discussion about these topics doesn't just go away. What are ways to continue a tobacco treatment discussion within the community?</b></p> <p><b>Q17. What is the best approach to reach out to your community members about these topics? Some examples are online focus groups, in-person focus groups, or individual interviews.</b></p> |

## Discussion Guide- In-depth Interviews

| Portland Immigrant Tobacco Use- IDIs |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Close                                | <p>Thank you very much for taking the time to talk with us about your experience. You will receive an email from a gift card company called Rybbon within 3-5 days. Once you receive the email, you'll have 90 days to claim your gift card.</p> <p><b>Do you have any other questions for me?</b><br/><b>Who do you know that may be interested in talking to us about this topic?</b><br/>(Collect their contact information: name, phone, email)</p> <p>Is your email (verify email address)?</p> <p><b>Thank you for your time!</b></p> |



# Discussion Guide: *Focus Group*

# Discussion Guide- Focus Group

| Portland Immigrant Tobacco Use- FGs |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Introduction                        | Hi everyone! My name is Ally and I'm the moderator for today's focus group. The group will run for about 90 minutes, and I want to hear about your experience and thoughts on tobacco in your communities.  |
| Agenda                              | What we're doing today is a free-flowing discussion and you are the experts. I'd like to hear from each one of you about all the topics I will bring up. Say what you think, there are no right or wrong answers, and everyone's opinion is respected.  |
| Moderator Information               | I work for Market Decisions Research, an independent public research firm in Portland, Maine and I've been trained to lead this discussion. We are working with The City of Portland Public Health Division to learn more about your community and the community's experience with tobacco, opinions of tobacco, and tobacco exposure.  |
| Disclosures                         | <p>If it is ok with everyone, this discussion will be recorded and transcribed for note taking and reporting purposes. This also allows the group to have my full attention. After all focus groups are complete and transcribed, I will prepare a summary report for the City of Portland on what was said, but I won't report who said what. The recordings will be deleted after the transcriptions are complete. The transcriptions will exclude any identifiable information. We also would like to remind everyone that anything said in the focus group does not leave the discussion. Before I begin recording, does anyone have questions or concerns?</p> <p>Is it ok to start recording?</p> |

# Discussion Guide- Focus Group

| Portland Immigrant Tobacco Use- FGs |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Guidelines                          | <p>Meeting online like this is becoming more common but it is a little different than a traditional focus group. I'd like to remind everyone to above all be respectful and follow these guidelines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Please allow everyone equal airtime to talk</li><li>- Every question is voluntary. If anyone feels uncomfortable about a topic, please feel free to skip the question.</li><li>- Please turn on your cameras if possible. It is important for us to see your body language and facial expressions. Though, if you do not have access to a camera or prefer not to use it, I understand.</li><li>- If you need to step away for a minute, please mute your microphone to not disrupt the rest of the group.</li><li>- If you have a question or comment you would like to share privately, please feel free to use the chat feature and message me. Make sure to send the message to me privately if needed.</li></ul> <p>(If interpreter/translator is present) We have an interpreter with us today in case there are any language barriers as well. (introduce them)</p> |
| Terminology                         | <p>Throughout this discussion I will use the term tobacco use. By tobacco use, I mean smoking cigarettes, vaping, chewing tobacco, or hookah smoking.</p>   |
| Self Intros                         | <p>I'd like to have everyone introduce themselves. Let's go around and please share your name and one thing you're looking forward to this summer. I'll go first.</p>   |



# Discussion Guide- Focus Group

| Portland Immigrant Tobacco Use- FGs                      |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Part 1: Intro Activity</b>                            | <p>Let's start the discussion with an activity. I am going to show you two different images. Please share what immediately comes to mind after I share each picture.</p> <p><b>First image: (choose a picture showing combustible tobacco use such as cigarettes, cigars, and cigarillos.)</b></p> <p><b>Second image: (choose a picture showing electronic tobacco products such as vapes, vaporizers, vape pens, hookah pens, electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes or e-cigs), e-cigars, and e-pipes.)</b></p> <p>PROBE: What comes to mind?<br/>PROBE: Tell me more about "topic".</p> |
| <b>Part 2: Experience with Tobacco in your Community</b> | <p>I want to transition to your personal experience with tobacco and your observations surrounding your community.</p> <p><b>How do you feel about tobacco products in general?</b></p> <p>PROBE: What do you think about tobacco use within your community?</p> <p><b>What leads people in your community to try tobacco products?</b></p> <p>PROBE: What are the reasons people continue to use tobacco?<br/>PROBE: What types of tobacco products do people in your community use the most often?</p>   |

# Discussion Guide- Focus Group

| Portland Immigrant Tobacco Use- FGs |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Part 3: Acculturation               | <p>Next, I would like to talk about when people in your community first move to the Portland area.</p> <p><b>When your community members first move to Cumberland County, how does their tobacco use change?</b></p> <p>PROBE: Have you noticed more use, less use, or no change in tobacco use?<br/>PROBE: What are the reasons for this?<br/>PROBE: Are there other reasons you think new community members start using tobacco for the first time?</p> <p><b>How do things like gender, religion, or culture impact tobacco use?</b></p> <p>PROBE: Can you think of any other demographics that may affect tobacco use?</p> <p><b>What protects people in your community from tobacco use?</b></p> |
| Part 4: Barriers                    | <p>Now let's talk about barriers.</p> <p><b>What limits your community's ability to offer tobacco use programs and treatment?</b></p> <p>PROBE: What could help overcome this barrier?<br/>PROBE: What could the City of Portland do to help your community with this barrier?</p> <p><b>What prevents people from quitting or reducing their tobacco use?</b></p> <p>PROBE: What would make this better?</p>   |

# Discussion Guide- Focus Group

| Portland Immigrant Tobacco Use- FGs |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Part 5:<br>Future Services          | <p>We are just about finished! Only a few more questions. Thank you for the great discussion so far.</p> <p><b>The city of Portland is hoping to create programs and information that will speak specifically to people in your community. What do you think about this idea?</b></p> <p><b>What additional tools or assistance would be helpful to improve tobacco treatment for members of your community?</b></p> <p>PROBE: Who would you trust for help about tobacco use?<br/>PROBE: Where do you go for information? Do you use the internet, media sources, local organizations etc.</p> <p><b>What is the best way to keep your community informed about new services?</b></p> |
| Close                               | <p>Looks like we're running low on time. <b>I'd like to go around to everyone and collect your final thoughts.</b></p> <p>Thank you all for participating in this group. This has been wonderful! You are being paid for your time here and you will receive an email from a gift card company called Rybbon within 3-5 days. Once you receive the email, you'll have 90 days to claim your gift card.</p> <p>Does anyone have any final questions before we wrap up?</p> <p>Thank you again.</p>  |



# Online Survey

# Online Survey

## Portland Immigrant Tobacco Use- Online Survey

### Introduction

Thank you for your time and interest in this survey. We are conducting this interview to learn from community members like yourself. We want to know more about your community and the community's experience with tobacco, opinions of tobacco, and tobacco exposure. Your feedback is very important- it will help speak to your community's needs and help the City better understand.

Market Decisions Research is an independent public research firm in Portland, Maine. We are working with The City of Portland Public Health Division to conduct these surveys.

This survey is voluntary, and there are no right or wrong answers. Any information you provide will be confidential and the data will be reported in summary form only. You may also skip any question you do not want to answer. You will receive a \$10 gift card after completing the interview as a thank you for your time.

### Image1

What comes to mind when you see the above image?

### Image2

What comes to mind when you see the above image?

### Tobacco1

How do you feel about tobacco products (cigarettes, cigars, vaping devices, or chew) in general?

### Tobacco2

What leads people in your community to try tobacco products?

### Tobacco3

When people in your community first move to Cumberland County, how does their tobacco use change?

# Online Survey

## Portland Immigrant Tobacco Use- Online Survey

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| Intersect01 | How do things like gender, religion, or culture impact tobacco use?  |
| Protect01   | What protects people in your community from tobacco use?   |
| Protect02   | What limitations or challenges does your community face when trying to receive tobacco education, treatment aimed at quitting tobacco, or other tobacco-related needs? |
| Protect03   | What prevents people from quitting or reducing their tobacco use?  |
| Portland01  | The City of Portland is hoping to create programs and information that will speak specifically to people in your community. What do you think about this idea?         |
| Portland02  | What additional tools or assistance would be helpful to improve tobacco treatment for members of your community?   |
| Portland03  | What is the best way to keep your community informed about new services?   |

# Online Survey

## Portland Immigrant Tobacco Use- Online Survey

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| Demo01  | <p>Thank you for your time. These last few questions are purely for classification purposes.</p> <p>First, what language do you mostly speak at home?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• English</li><li>• Arabic</li><li>• French</li><li>• Lingala</li><li>• Spanish</li><li>• Something Else (specify)</li></ul>                 |
| Demo01A | <p>What is your country of origin?</p>   |
| Demo02  | <p>What do you consider your gender to be?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Male</li><li>• Female</li><li>• Some other identity (specify)</li></ul>   |
| Demo03  | <p>Do you consider yourself to be Hispanic or Latino?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Yes, I am Hispanic or Latino</li><li>• No</li></ul>  |
| Demo04  | <p>How would you describe your race? Please select all that apply to you.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ American Indian or Native American</li><li>▪ Asian</li><li>▪ Black, African, or African American</li><li>▪ Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander</li><li>▪ White</li><li>▪ Some other identity (specify)</li></ul> |
| Email   | <p>Thank you for your time. Please provide us with your email address in order to receive the \$10 gift card incentive. The email will come from a company called Rybbon and you will receive it within the next week.</p>   |



# Thank you!

For questions, please reach out to Elisa Ungaro via email at [eungaro@marketdecisions.com](mailto:eungaro@marketdecisions.com).