
2009-2010 ARKANSAS HEALTH CARE PROVIDER TOBACCO SURVEY

AUGUST 16, 2010



Arkansas Department of Health



STAMP OUT SMOKING
ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
1-800-QUIT-NOW

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Program (TPCP) at the Arkansas Department of Health works to reduce tobacco use in order to decrease not only the morbidity and mortality, but also to alleviate the social and economic burden caused by tobacco in Arkansas by empowering community organizations and the people of Arkansas to fight the destructive influence of tobacco.

Special thanks go to the following people for their assistance in preparing and reviewing the Arkansas 2009-2010 Health Care Provider Survey.

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METHODOLOGY

The Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Program (TPCP) at the Arkansas Department of Health conducted the survey between November 2009 and May 2010. Using a list obtained from the Center for Public Health Practice, Health Statistics Branch of the Arkansas Department of Health and the Arkansas State Medical Board.

A total of 4,133 surveys were mailed out to health care providers holding a medical license in the State of Arkansas. These included 2,919 primary care physicians, 220 psychiatrists, and 994 dentists. A follow-up mailing was sent in late February to those who had not yet responded to the first mailing. Those who completed and returned the questionnaire received compensation for their time and effort in the form of a Best Buy gift card.

Out of the 4,133 surveys mailed out, 310 were returned due to bad address, retired, deceased, or no longer at address. The 310 breakdown by specialty is 252 primary care physicians, 26 psychiatrists, and 32 dentists. A total of 1,217 completed surveys were returned by the cutoff date of May 18, 2010. This gives an overall response rate of 29.4%. The response rate among primary care physicians was 25.4% (740). It was 25.5% (56) for psychiatrists and 42.4% (421) for dentists. If you remove the 310 invalid initial surveys, the overall response rate is 31.8%. The response rate among primary care physicians was 27.7% (740), 28.9% (56) among psychiatrists, and 43.8% (421) among dentists. Results are provided by total, primary care physicians and dentists. Other groups were too limited in numbers to analyze separately. Primary Care Physicians (PC) includes: Family/General Practice Physicians (297), OB/GYN Physicians (74), Internal Medicine Physicians (251), and Pediatricians (118).

The results presented in this report are primarily a set of responses to each individual question contained in the survey. Because this was a self-administered survey respondents were able to pick and choose which questions they answered it was not possible to use any given question as an exclusion criteria. There were only two sets of cross tabulations or skip pattern questions presented in this report. One cross tabulation was done for Question 11: Have you heard of the Arkansas Tobacco Quitline? and another cross tabulation was done for Question 18: Do you refer patients who want to quit to outside cessation programs? For those who answered "Yes" other questions were asked and are presented in this report. For all questions except for 12, 13, 14 and 19, the number of respondents varied from 1,081 to 1,184. For Questions 12, 13, and 14, percentages were based on only the 536 health care providers who had heard of the Quitline. For Question 19, percentages were based on only the 501 health care providers who referred patients to outside cessation programs.

SUMMARY

The Public Health Service published the Guidelines *Treating Tobacco Use and Dependence* in 2000. It was developed by a multidisciplinary, non-Federal panel of experts including tobacco cessation representatives. The guidelines are intended to assist clinicians, health care administrators, insurers, and purchasers in identifying and assessing tobacco users and assist in delivering effective interventions to those with tobacco dependence.

For patients who are willing to quit they should be treated using the “5 A’s”:

Ask about tobacco use at every visit

Advise smokers and other tobacco users to quit

Assess readiness to quit

Assist in the quit attempt

Arrange follow-up.

Fifty percent (50%) of respondents to this survey have never heard of these guidelines (42% of primary care physicians and 64% of dentists). Another 34% have heard of the guidelines, but have not read them (38% of primary care physicians and 27% of dentists). Some, 6%, have read the guidelines, but have not used them (7% of primary care physicians and 5% of dentists). Nine percent (9%) report having used the guidelines (13% of primary care physicians and 3% of dentists).

In their responses to questions 4 through 10, primary care physicians reported a higher frequency of action steps than dentists. Eighty-nine percent (89%) of primary care physicians reported that they “always” or “most of the time” ask their patients if they smoke or use tobacco. This compares to 77% of dentists who ask their patients “always” or “most of the time” if they smoke or use tobacco. This difference persists when advising patients to quit, encouraging them to set a quit date, and making referrals to a cessation program. Even though a high percentage report action steps for their patients, there is considerable room for improvement.

In questions 20 through 25, healthcare providers were asked about barriers to referring patients to cessation treatment programs. Over 75% agreed that the following were barriers: 1) patient’s resistance to cessation messages, 2) a lack of provider’s awareness of available programs, and 3) competing priorities in a visit.

DEMOGRAPHICS

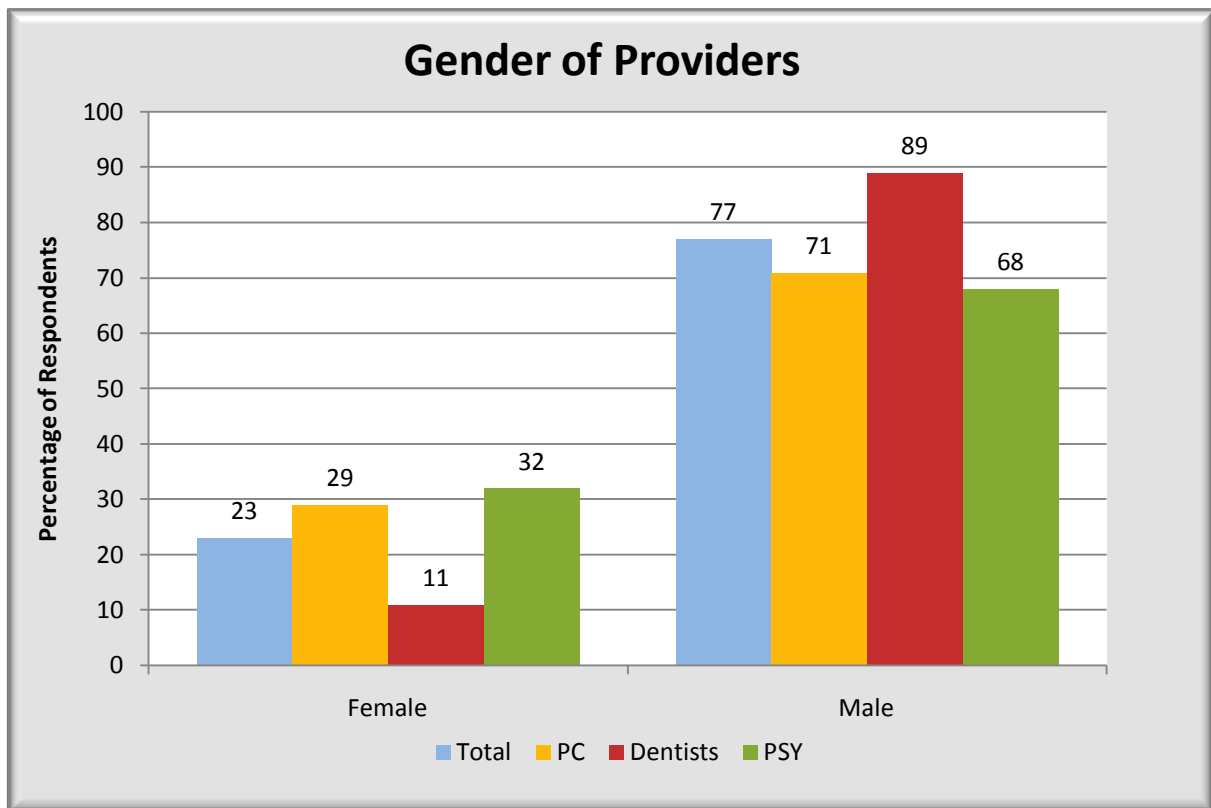
Table 1: Survey Response Rates

Type of Provider	% of Respondents within Category	% of Total Respondents
Primary Care Physicians (PC)	28% (740/2667)	60.8%
Dentists	44% (421/962)	34.6%
Psychiatrists (PSY)	29% (56/194)	4.6%
All Respondents Combined	32% (1,217/3823)	100.0%

Note: Primary Care Physicians (PC) includes: Family/General Practice Physicians, OB/GYN Physicians, Internal Medicine Physicians, and Pediatricians.

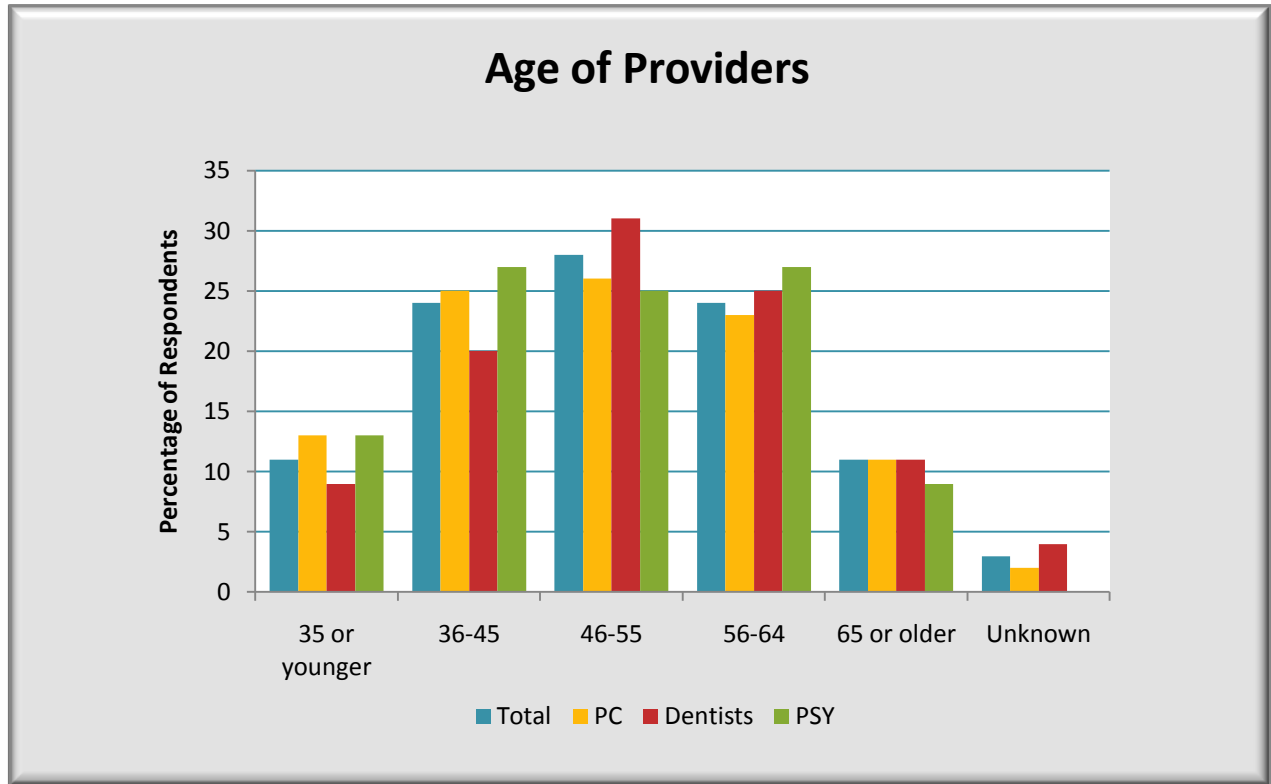
Gender

Twenty three (23%) of responding health care providers were female and 77% were male. Gender distribution by specialty is presented in the following graph.



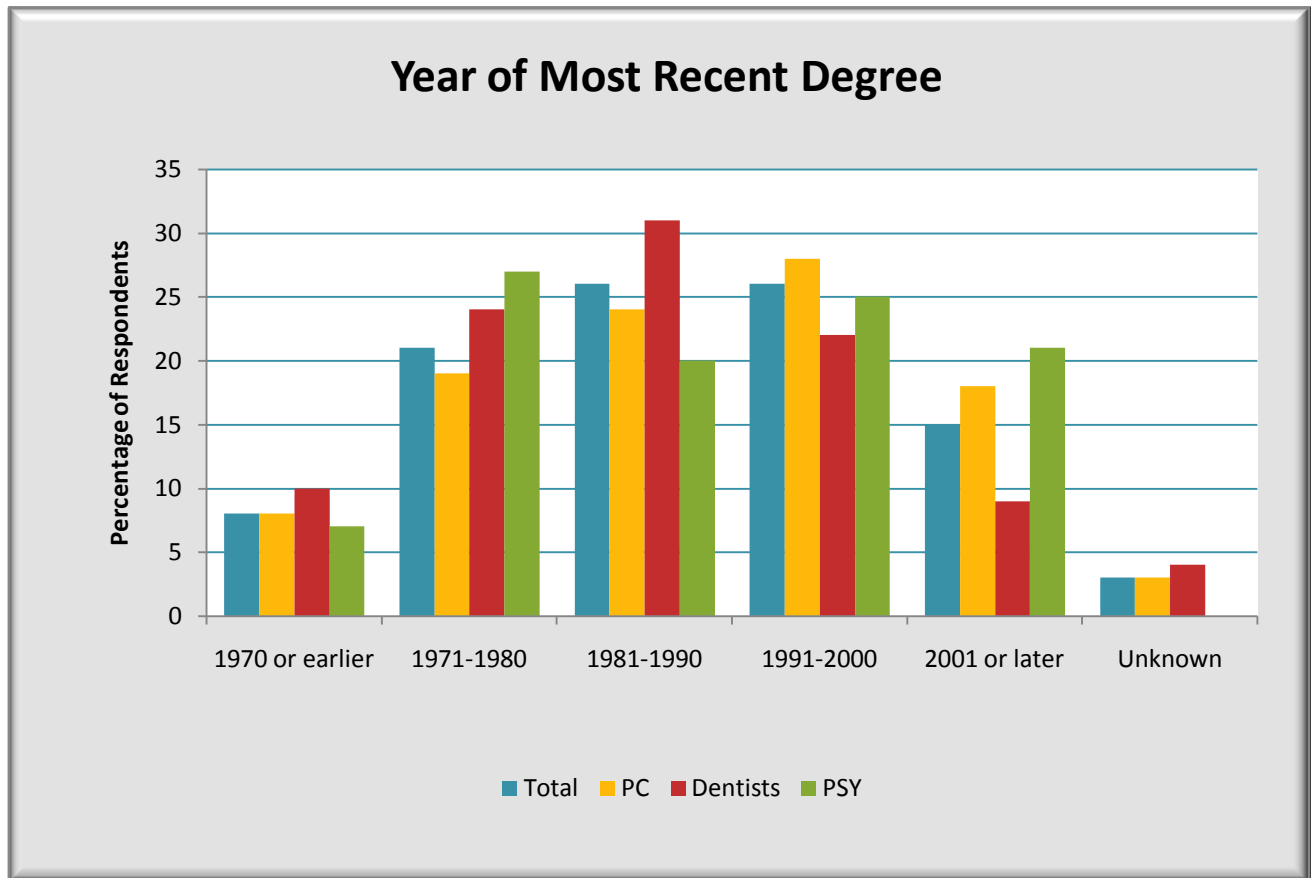
Age

The age of the responding health care providers was reported as follows: 11% were 35 or younger; 24% were 36-45 years old; 28% were ages 46-55; 24% were 56-64; 11% were 65 or older; and 3% did not report an age. Age distribution by specialty is presented in the following graph.



Year of Most Recent Professional/Graduate Degree

Respondents were asked what year did they complete their most recent professional/graduate degree. The results were reported as follows: 8% said 1970 or earlier; 21% said 1971-1980; 26% said 1981-1990; 26% said 1991-2000; 15% said 2001 or later; and 3% did not report when they got their most recent professional or graduate degree. The year of most recent degree distribution by specialty is presented in the following graph.



RESULTS

The following results report percentages based only on those who answered the particular question. The number in parenthesis is the number of respondents. The total percentage for each question may not always add up to 100% because of rounding or in cases where respondents were able to provide multiple responses. Primary care physicians and dentists are displayed separately. The numbers in the total column include primary care physicians, dentists, and psychiatrists (psychiatrists do not have a separate column due to small numbers).

	Total	Primary Care Physicians	Dentists
Question 1: Does your clinical site have a routine record system to track patients who smoke or use tobacco?			
Yes	39% (449)	47% (326)	28% (110)
No	61% (694)	53% (370)	72% (284)
Question 2: Do you have a plan to have electronic medical records for your practice in the next two years?			
Yes	32% (360)	37% (256)	21% (81)
No	33% (379)	23% (161)	52% (203)
Already have electronic medical records	35% (401)	40% (280)	27% (106)
Question 3: Do you have direct health care contact with patients in your outpatient practice?			
Yes	86% (956)	93% (638)	73% (273)
No	14% (152)	7% (45)	27% (99)

The next seven questions were asked of respondents to indicate how frequently they do the following in their outpatient practice.

	Total	Primary Care Physicians	Dentists
Question 4: Ask patients if they smoke/use tobacco.			
Always	50% (582)	51% (362)	48% (192)
Most of the time	34% (396)	38% (265)	29% (117)
Some of the time	11% (133)	9% (64)	15% (61)
Rarely	3% (39)	2% (12)	6% (24)
Never	1% (10)	<1% (3)	2% (6)
Question 5: Advise smokers/tobacco users to stop using tobacco.			
Always	54% (624)	60% (422)	45% (181)
Most of the time	33% (386)	32% (225)	35% (141)
Some of the time	9% (109)	7% (46)	13% (52)
Rarely	2% (28)	1% (7)	5% (19)
Never	1% (11)	1% (4)	2% (7)
Question 6: Ask smokers/tobacco users if they are interested in quitting.			
Always	33% (381)	40% (279)	22% (86)
Most of the time	33% (381)	36% (257)	27% (108)
Some of the time	22% (254)	19% (131)	27% (109)
Rarely	10% (114)	4% (30)	20% (78)
Never	3% (29)	1% (8)	5% (19)
Question 7: Encourage them to set a quit date.			
Always	17% (190)	19% (136)	11% (42)
Most of the time	24% (280)	30% (208)	17% (65)
Some of the time	28% (316)	30% (212)	22% (86)
Rarely	22% (247)	15% (108)	32% (126)
Never	10% (114)	5% (38)	18% (72)
Question 8: Discuss medication options, such as nicotine replacement or Zyban® (Bupropion SR) or Chantix® (Varenicline).			
Always	13% (154)	17% (117)	7% (28)
Most of the time	32% (372)	40% (283)	19% (75)
Some of the time	27% (313)	25% (175)	30% (118)
Rarely	15% (177)	10% (73)	24% (96)
Never	12% (143)	8% (57)	21% (83)

	Total	Primary Care Physicians	Dentists
Question 9: Refer for smoking/tobacco use cessation treatment.			
Always	7% (83)	9% (61)	5% (18)
Most of the time	13% (153)	18% (125)	6% (23)
Some of the time	28% (322)	32% (222)	23% (92)
Rarely	29% (333)	25% (175)	34% (136)
Never	23% (263)	17% (119)	32% (129)

Question 10: Follow-up with a letter, call, or visit about their smoking/tobacco use.

Always	3% (36)	4% (28)	1% (5)
Most of the time	7% (78)	9% (64)	2% (7)
Some of the time	14% (163)	18% (128)	8% (30)
Rarely	26% (305)	29% (203)	23% (93)
Never	50% (573)	40% (280)	66% (263)

The Arkansas Tobacco Quitline

	Total	Primary Care Physicians	Dentists
Question 11: Have you heard of the Arkansas Tobacco Quitline?			
Yes	46% (536)	54% (380)	33% (135)
No	54% (631)	46% (328)	67% (269)

Questions 12: Have you ever referred a patient to the Arkansas Tobacco Quitline?

Yes	53% (282)	60% (227)	33% (44)
No	47% (533)	40% (150)	67% (91)

Question 13: Are you familiar with the fax referral to the Arkansas Tobacco Quitline program?

Yes	22% (115)	26% (96)	12% (16)
No	78% (413)	74% (277)	88% (118)

Question 14: Have you ever referred a patient to the Arkansas Tobacco Quitline using the fax referral program?

Yes	12% (64)	15% (56)	6% (8)
No	88% (468)	85% (320)	94% (127)

	Total	Primary Care Physicians	Dentists
Question 15: In what format would you like to receive educational materials on tobacco cessation? (fill in all that apply)			
CD-ROM	17% (210)	17% (125)	17% (73)
DVD	22% (271)	19% (140)	28% (118)
print materials	66% (803)	63% (467)	70% (295)
local/regional conference meeting	10% (122)	11% (81)	8% (35)
state-wide conference meeting	5% (64)	5% (37)	5% (23)
real-time web broadcasts (ICN, Illuminate, PolyCom)	2% (26)	2% (18)	2% (7)
web-based training module (no live or real-time) providing CME	24% (294)	28% (205)	17% (71)
in-person at your work site	8% (99)	9% (70)	6% (24)
none	9% (108)	9% (65)	10% (43)

Cessation Counseling

	Total	Primary Care Physicians	Dentists
Question 16: If you provide on-site tobacco cessation counseling, what type of program do you offer? (fill in all that apply)			
individual counseling	39% (474)	49% (359)	22% (93)
group counseling	4% (44)	5% (36)	1% (3)
do not provide on-site tobacco cessation counseling	52% (637)	42% (313)	70% (294)
Question 17: If you provide on-site tobacco cessation counseling, who provides it? (fill in all that apply)			
counseling provided by me	33% (404)	42% (312)	18% (74)
counseling provided by other health staff	16% (194)	19% (142)	10% (44)
do not provide on-site tobacco cessation counseling	47% (576)	36% (269)	67% (280)

	Total	Primary Care Physicians	Dentists
Question 18: Do you refer your patients who want to quit to outside cessation programs or resources?			
Yes	44% (501)	49% (341)	36% (140)
No	56% (644)	51% (361)	64% (248)
Question 19: If yes, what types of programs do you refer patients to? (fill in all that apply)			
individual counseling	41% (205)	36% (122)	54% (75)
group counseling	17% (83)	16% (54)	17% (24)
hospital-based	23% (115)	27% (93)	13% (18)
“fax referral” to counseling	8% (38)	10% (33)	4% (5)
telephone counseling/quit line	48% (238)	56% (190)	27% (38)

The next 6 questions were asked of respondents to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree that the following are barriers for them in referring patients to tobacco (smoking) cessation treatment programs.

	Total	Primary Care Physicians	Dentists
Question 20: Lack of time to set up referral.			
Strongly Agree	14% (163)	15% (105)	12% (48)
Somewhat Agree	45% (520)	45% (320)	45% (320)
Somewhat Disagree	25% (291)	25% (177)	25% (177)
Strongly Disagree	15% (176)	15% (104)	15% (104)
Question 21: No or limited provider reimbursement.			
Strongly Agree	21% (240)	21% (146)	21% (82)
Somewhat Agree	37% (415)	38% (268)	34% (128)
Somewhat Disagree	20% (223)	17% (120)	24% (91)
Strongly Disagree	23% (255)	24% (164)	21% (81)
Question 22: Patient's resistance to cessation messages.			
Strongly Agree	27% (306)	27% (188)	26% (103)
Somewhat Agree	54% (623)	55% (387)	54% (209)
Somewhat Disagree	14% (164)	14% (99)	13% (52)
Strongly Disagree	5% (52)	4% (26)	7% (26)
Question 23: Lack of awareness of available programs.			
Strongly Agree	28% (322)	26% (183)	30% (119)
Somewhat Agree	50% (576)	49% (347)	52% (203)
Somewhat Disagree	16% (183)	18% (124)	13% (53)
Strongly Disagree	6% (74)	8% (53)	5% (18)
Question 24: Lack of faith in the effectiveness of fax back referrals.			
Strongly Agree	6% (66)	6% (41)	6% (22)
Somewhat Agree	38% (412)	34% (229)	47% (170)
Somewhat Disagree	38% (416)	41% (275)	31% (114)
Strongly Disagree	17% (187)	18% (121)	16% (58)
Question 25: Competing priorities in the visit. (e.g. acute illness)			
Strongly Agree	36% (415)	39% (276)	32% (121)
Somewhat Agree	47% (531)	46% (323)	48% (184)
Somewhat Disagree	12% (132)	10% (73)	13% (50)
Strongly Disagree	6% (64)	4% (31)	8% (29)

Note: Questions 26-30 and 33 are demographic questions. Demographics are presented earlier in this document in charts on pages 5-7.

	Total	Primary Care Physicians	Dentists
Question 31: How many hours per week do you spend on providing direct patient care?			
0-10 hours	4% (44)	5% (34)	2% (9)
11-20 hours	7% (85)	9% (66)	4% (15)
21-30 hours	11% (122)	10% (70)	12% (46)
31-40 hours	44% (504)	29% (204)	70% (274)
41-50 hours	20% (230)	26% (181)	9% (35)
51+ hours	14% (161)	20% (142)	9% (14)
Question 32: In what type of setting do you currently practice (select one)?			
solo private practice	42% (464)	25% (169)	71% (278)
group private practice	37% (408)	44% (296)	25% (97)
college or university	8% (87)	12% (77)	1% (5)
hospital	8% (91)	11% (75)	2% (8)
community clinic	6% (64)	8% (50)	1% (4)
Question 34: Are you a Medicaid provider?			
Yes	71% (841)	84% (598)	48% (194)
No	29% (336)	16% (115)	52% (214)
Question 35: How many patients do you see on an average day?			
less than 5	3% (39)	4% (28)	2% (10)
6 to 10	11% (130)	10% (69)	13% (51)
11 to 15	23% (268)	20% (140)	29% (116)
16 or more	63% (742)	67% (479)	57% (230)
Question 36: Please fill in the response that best describes your experience with the <i>Public Health Service Clinical Practice Guideline: Treating Tobacco Use and Dependence (2008)</i> or ANGELS Guidelines.			
never heard of these guidelines	50% (574)	42% (292)	64% (255)
have heard of these guidelines, but have not read them	34% (385)	38% (260)	27% (107)
have read these guidelines, but have not used them	6% (73)	7% (46)	5% (21)
have used these guidelines	9% (107)	13% (90)	3% (13)

	Total	Primary Care Physicians	Dentists
Question 37: Have you smoked at least 100 cigarettes in your life?			
Yes	23% (275)	22% (156)	26% (106)
No	77% (906)	78% (561)	74% (302)
Question 38: Do you currently smoke cigarettes or use tobacco?			
Yes	3% (30)	2% (14)	3% (14)
No	97% (1151)	98% (703)	97% (394)
Question 39: Would you be interested in receiving training in tobacco cessation treatment?			
Yes	38% (430)	39% (269)	34% (135)
No	62% (714)	61% (425)	66% (261)
Question 40: Would you utilize an electronic referral system to refer patients for cessation or quit line service?			
Yes	72% (832)	75% (525)	67% (269)
No	28% (320)	25% (174)	33% (130)

Current smoking among survey respondents was very low at 3%. Rates for primary care physicians and dentists were equivalent. The number of current smokers (n=30) was too small to analyze cessation advise to patients by smoking status of the healthcare provider.