

US taxpayers bear financial burden of smoking-related disease

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Cigarette smoking generates as much as \$170 billion in annual health care spending in the United States, according to a new study co-authored by researchers at Georgia State University's School of Public Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and RTI International.

Dr. Terry F. Pechacek, a professor of health management and policy at Georgia State, was the senior author of the study, "Annual Healthcare Spending Attributable to Cigarette Smoking (An Update)," which was published Wednesday by the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*.

The study found that taxpayers bear 60 percent of the cost of smoking-attributable diseases through publicly funded programs such as Medicare and Medicaid. Despite declines in the rates of smoking in recent years, the costs on society due to smoking have increased.

Researchers found that smoking is responsible for:

- \$45 billion in of Medicare spending per year,
- \$39.9 billion in Medicaid spending per year and
- \$23.8 billion in spending for other government-sponsored insurance programs per year.

The researchers concluded smoking accounts for 8.7 percent of annual healthcare spending in the U.S.

The analysis, conducted in 2013, used data from the 2006-2010 Medical Expenditure Panel Survey and 2004-2009 National Health Interview Survey.

Cigarette smoking remains a leading cause of serious, preventable disease in the United States, with adults reporting at least 14 million major medical conditions attributable to smoking.

The study concludes that "comprehensive tobacco control programs and policies are still needed to continue progress toward ending the tobacco epidemic in the U.S. 50 years after the release of the first Surgeon General's report on smoking and health."

More information: [www.ajpmonline.org/article/S07... \(14\)00616-3/fulltext](http://www.ajpmonline.org/article/S07... (14)00616-3/fulltext)

Provided by Georgia State University

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