

New study shows racial/ethnic variations in quitline reach among US smokers

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Quitlines, hotlines that provide free cessation services for smokers, appear to be reaching minority populations that typically underutilize cessation treatments and have high smoking prevalence, particularly African Americans and American Indians/Alaska Natives. This study, publishing today in the journal *Nicotine & Tobacco Research*, is the first to use multi-state data to compare the reach of quitlines for different racial/ethnic groups.

Researchers used a database of over 1.2 million quitline callers across 45 [states](#) to determine reach of the service. By comparing the number of quitline callers to the number of [tobacco users](#) in a particular minority group, the study shows that quitline reach was highest for American Indians/Alaskan Natives in 27 states, for African Americans in 14 states, and for non-Hispanic whites in 4 states. However, the actual percentage of these quitline callers of overall tobacco users is relatively low. 0.27% to 9.98% of American Indian/Alaskan Native tobacco users have called a quitline, compared to 0.17% to 3.85% of African American tobacco users, 0.08% to 3.42% of non-Hispanic white tobacco users, and 0.08% to 3.18% of Hispanic tobacco users.

The findings support the conclusion that although overall reach remains low across racial/ethnic populations, quitlines have the potential to reach a broad range of racial/ethnic [minority populations](#) that experience disproportionate rates of smoking and its associated diseases.

"Ongoing monitoring of the use of state quitlines can help and guide

outreach to all race/ethnic groups with the goal of increasing the overall proportion and number of tobacco users that use quitlines," says lead author LaTisha L. Marshall. "These efforts should be complemented by comprehensive tobacco control initiatives that increase cessation, including mass media campaigns, smoke-free policies, increased tobacco prices, expansion of health insurance coverage, and health systems change."

More information: *Nicotine & Tobacco Research* (2016). [DOI: 10.1093/ntr/ntw281](https://doi.org/10.1093/ntr/ntw281)

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