

Smoking & Pacific Peoples

Factsheet

Prepared by The Quit Group

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www.quit.org.nz

Quitline: 0800 778 778

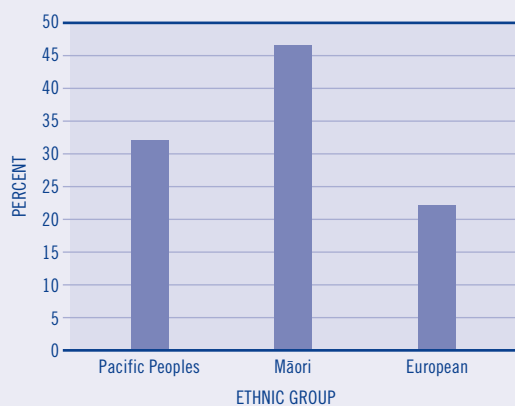


SMOKING RATES OF PACIFIC PEOPLES

Pacific peoples numbered 231,801 or 7 percent of the total population of New Zealand in 2001, with 58 percent born in New Zealand.¹ It has been projected that by 2021 the number of Pacific peoples living in New Zealand will almost double to 413,900.² The main Pacific groups represented in New Zealand are Samoan, Tongan, Niuean, Cook Island, Fijian, Tokelauan and Tuvaluan.¹

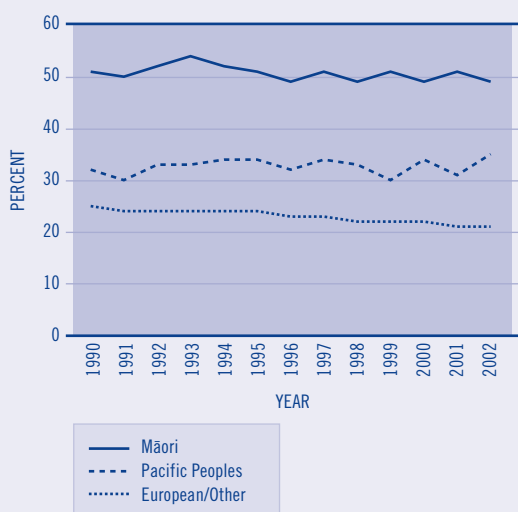
Almost a third (32 percent) of Pacific peoples in New Zealand smoke, which is more than Europeans (22 percent) but less than Māori (46 percent) (Figure 1). The prevalence of Pacific peoples smoking in 2002 was the highest since 1990 although it cannot be said yet if this is the beginning of an increasing trend (Figure 2).³ A higher percentage of Pacific males smoke compared to Pacific females (Figure 3). However, the percentage of Pacific females who smoke has been increasing over the last few years. Up to 10 years ago it was not socially acceptable for Pacific women to smoke and it was taboo for women to be seen smoking in public.⁴ This social norm has been shifting during the last decade as more Pacific women take up smoking, and is reflected particularly by the increasing percentage of younger Pacific females smoking.³

FIGURE 1: AGE-STANDARDISED PREVALENCE OF SMOKING IN NEW ZEALAND BY ETHNICITY, 2002



Source: *Tobacco Facts 2003*.³

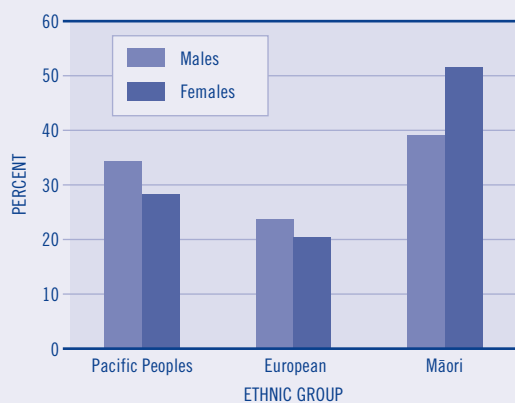
FIGURE 2: PREVALENCE OF SMOKING BY ETHNICITY, 1990–2002



Source: *Tobacco Facts 2003*.³

Note: This data is not age-standardised.

FIGURE 3: AGE-STANDARDISED PREVALENCE OF SMOKING FOR MALES AND FEMALES BY ETHNICITY, 2002



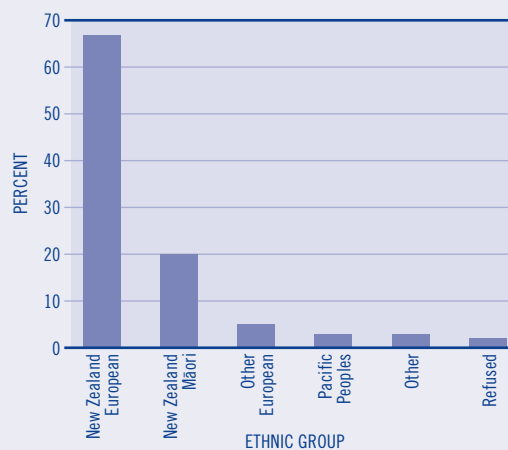
Source: *Tobacco Facts 2003*.³

PACIFIC CALLERS TO QUITLINE

The Quitline offers three main services: mailing out information packs to callers to the 0800 free phone number, telephone support and advice from Quit Advisors including a call-back service, and issuing of exchange cards for subsidised nicotine patches and gum, also referred to as nicotine replacement therapy (NRT). Callers are required to register with the Quitline to receive telephone support and nicotine patches or gum.

In the period January 2001 to July 2003, a total of 144,808 callers registered with the New Zealand Quitline, most of whom were New Zealand European (67 percent). Figure 4 shows that Pacific peoples made up 3 percent (4,147) of callers registered with Quitline during this period. This figure is half that of the current 7 percent resident population of Pacific peoples in New Zealand. In comparison, Māori comprised 20 percent of registered callers, just over 5 percent more than the proportion of Māori in the New Zealand population.

FIGURE 4: ETHNICITIES OF CALLERS REGISTERED WITH THE QUITLINE, JANUARY 2001 – JULY 2003

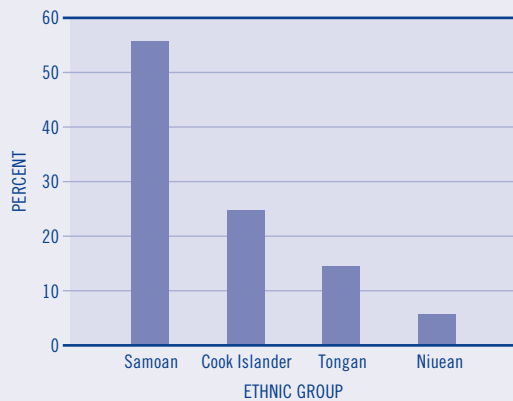


Source: The Quit Group, unpublished Quitline data, August 2003.

Note: Total may exceed 100% because of multiple responses.

Over half of Pacific callers identified themselves as Samoan (55 percent), a quarter were Cook Islander, 14 percent Tongan and 6 percent Niuean (Figure 5).

FIGURE 5: REGISTERED PACIFIC CALLER ETHNICITY, JANUARY 2001 – JULY 2003



Source: The Quit Group, unpublished Quitline data, August 2003.

Half of Pacific callers who provided Quitline with their age were in the 20-34 year age group (52 percent). Only 3 percent of Pacific callers were over 55 years old. This contrasts with 11 percent of the overall proportion of callers who are over 55 years. The percentage of Pacific callers drops sharply from age 55, whereas the percentage of callers from the overall population declines more slowly after this age (Figure 6).

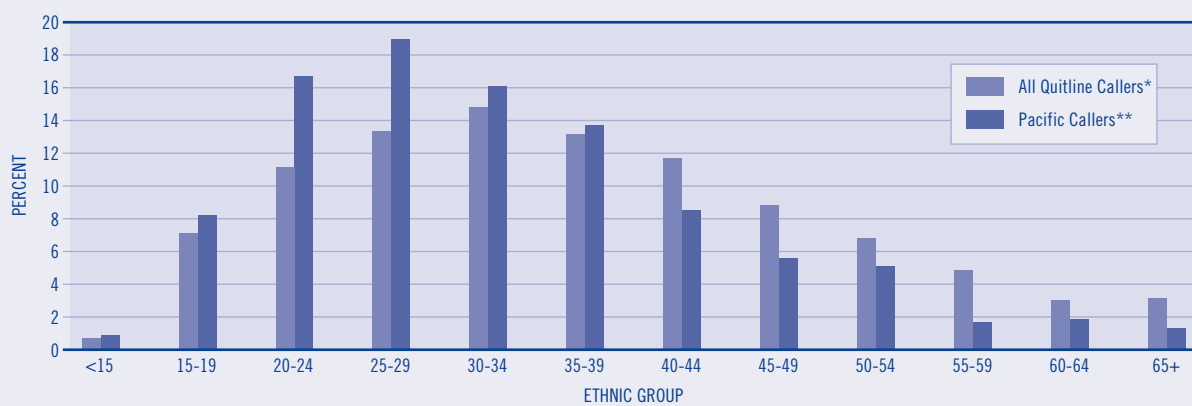
Equal numbers of Pacific males and females register with the Quitline. This contrasts to the overall trend that shows women make up a slightly higher proportion of registered callers than men (55 percent of women compared to 45 percent of men in the time period January 2001 to July 2003).

The Quitline has Pacific Advisors fluent in Samoan, Cook Island Māori and Tokelauen. Pacific speaking advisors spoke to 725 Pacific callers in the period January 2001 to June 2003.

Part of the Quitline programme, unique to New Zealand, is the issuing of nicotine patches or gum. Patches or gum were received by 2,335 Pacific callers. Eighty-six percent received patches, 14 percent received gum.

Half of registered Pacific callers were from the Auckland and Northland telephone calling region (09 area code) (Figure 7). This reflects the population distribution of Pacific peoples in New Zealand with two out of three (66 percent) Pacific peoples residing in the Auckland region. Of note, however, is that the proportion calling the Quitline (55 percent) is less than the proportion residing in the Auckland region (66 percent). Just over 1 percent reside in Northland.⁵

FIGURE 6: AGE DISTRIBUTION OF ALL CALLERS AND PACIFIC CALLERS REGISTERED TO QUITLINE, JANUARY 2001 – JULY 2003



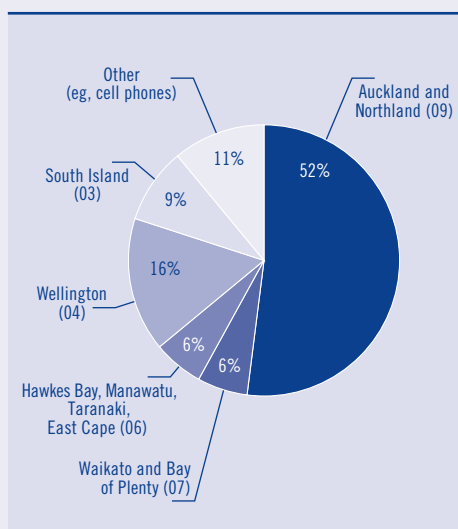
Source: The Quit Group, unpublished Quitline data, August 2003.

Note: * The graph shows ages for the 56,988 people who disclosed their age to Quitline, July 2001 to July 2003.

**The graph shows ages for the 1,832 Pacific peoples who disclosed their age to Quitline, January 2001 to June 2003.

The next largest Pacific caller area was Wellington at 16 percent (04 area code). This is slightly above the 14 percent population proportion of Pacific peoples in the Wellington region.⁵ Although Pacific peoples make up 6 percent of the population of the South Island (03 area code),⁵ 9 percent of calls from Pacific peoples were from this area. Figure 7 also displays the 11 percent of Pacific callers who prefer contact with the Quitline through their cell phones, reflecting the current trend of increasing cell phone use.

FIGURE 7: PACIFIC CALLERS' TELEPHONE AREA CODE REGION, JANUARY 2001 – JULY 2003



Source: The Quit Group, unpublished Quitline data, August 2003.

HEALTH EFFECTS OF SMOKING FOR PACIFIC PEOPLES

Tobacco is a risk factor for most of the leading causes of death for Pacific adult males and females including; ischaemic heart disease (IHD), chronic rheumatic heart disease, lung cancer, stroke, chronic obstructive respiratory disease (CORD) and diabetes.^{6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11} Ischaemic heart disease is a cause of death for a larger proportion of Pacific peoples in the 25 to 44 year age group than for New Zealand Europeans. For Pacific adults 45 and older, diabetes and lung cancer cause a higher proportion of deaths than in New Zealand Europeans of this age.⁶ Smoking aggravates the problems that many people with diabetes face including raising the risk of heart attacks and kidney disease and also increases the chances of developing nerve and eye damage.^{9, 12} For Pacific peoples, 8 percent of deaths in females and 19 percent in males could be avoided if smoking was eliminated.⁶ Smoking-related deaths and illnesses are the most easily preventable in Pacific communities.¹²

REFERENCES

- 1 Statistics New Zealand. 2002. *2001 Census: Ethnic Groups 2001*. Sourced from www.stats.govt.nz, 3 September 2003.
- 2 Statistics New Zealand. 2001. *Projected Pacific Population of New Zealand by Sex and Single-year of Age*. Sourced from www.stats.govt.nz, 3 September 2003.
- 3 Public Health Intelligence. 2003. *Tobacco Health Facts 2003: Public Health Intelligence Occasional Report No 20*. Sourced from www.moh.govt.nz, 12 January 2003.
- 4 Tasi L, Tumaai S, Fepuleai T. 2003. *Health, Smoking and Cessation: Research Findings from Pacific Health Service Provider, Community Leader and Community Fono Groups*. Unpublished report. Wellington: The Quit Group.
- 5 Statistics New Zealand. 2001. *Regional Council, Urban and Rural Area and Sex by Pacific Peoples Ethnic Groups (Total Responses) for the Census Usually Resident Population Count, 2001*. Sourced from www.stats.govt.nz, 3 September 2003.
- 6 Ministry of Health. 1999. *Our Health, Our Future; Hauora Pakari, Koiora Roa: The Health of New Zealanders 1999*. Wellington: Ministry of Health.
- 7 World Health Organization. *Tobacco Free Initiative: Health Impact*. Sourced from www.who.int/tobacco, 22 September 2003.
- 8 Heart Foundation New Zealand. *Heart Disease: How to Avoid it*. Sourced from www.heartfoundation.org.nz, 22 September 2003.
- 9 Diabetes New Zealand. *Smoking and Diabetes*. Sourced from www.diabetes.org.nz/smoking, 22 September 2003.
- 10 The Australian Lung Foundation. 2001. *Case Statement: Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease*. Sourced from www.lungnet.org.au, 22 September 2003.
- 11 The Stroke Foundation of New Zealand. *Preventing Stroke: Stroke Risk Factors*. Sourced from www.stroke.org.nz, 22 September 2003.
- 12 Cancer Society of New Zealand. 2003. *Health Effects of Smoking*. Sourced from www.cancernz.org.nz, 22 September 2003.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Please refer to the following websites:

WEB ADDRESS	ORGANISATION
www.quit.org.nz	The Quit Group, New Zealand
www.minpac.govt.nz	Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs
www.moh.govt.nz/pacific	Ministry of Health – Pacific Health
www.newhealth.govt.nz	
New Zealand/toolkits/	District Health Boards - Toolkits
www.resourcebooks.co.nz	
New Zealand/phd	Pacific Health Dialogue
www.appealforcommunities.org	Appeal (Pacific and Asian American tobacco control issues)
www.who.int	World Health Organization
www.nhf.org.nz	National Heart Foundation – contains contact details for the Pacific Islands Heartbeat programme