



# N.C. Tobacco Prevention Programs Regional Tobacco Prevention and Control Managers Educate and Engage New and Existing Stakeholders

## Summary:

On November 8, 2018 Tobacco Control Teams from Regions 6 & 8 collaborated with the North Carolina Public Health Training Center and the Center for Healthy Communities to provide a train-the-trainer program for 39 attendees on tobacco prevention and control that is relevant to our Regions. Topics included:

- Tobacco 101;
- New and emerging tobacco products;
- North Carolina tobacco prevention policy and advocacy;
- Military tobacco treatment and cessation;
- American Indian panel: Honoring traditions vs. commercial tobacco; and
- Youth tobacco prevention.

**Challenge:** The landscape of tobacco products and their use have been evolving significantly over the past decade.

For example, cigarette use is at an all-time low among adults and youth alike; however, electronic nicotine delivery products are booming in sales and use, especially among teens. According to the 2017 N.C. Youth Tobacco Survey, 16.9 percent of high school students and 5.3 percent of middle school students used e-cigarettes, the most commonly used tobacco product among youth.

Secondly, statistics tell us there is still higher use of tobacco use among the military and American Indian populations here in North Carolina that lead to disparities in health. According to the CDC, American Indian/Alaska Native youth and adults have the highest prevalence of cigarette smoking among all racial/ethnic groups in the U.S. It is also important to note what the difference is between traditional and commercial tobacco. Most are unaware that there is a distinct difference within this population of what tobacco is. Our military members are under immense stress. After speaking with some of the staff at Ft. Bragg, we learned that while the military values readiness to serve, it is a challenge to relay the benefits of being tobacco free to young soldiers and airmen because of the nature of their work, long hours, and stress that comes with active duty service.

Finally, as regional coordinators it is often a challenge to find an efficient medium to streamline and engage stakeholders with the flurry of new data and resources to affect policy and systems change that come regularly and rapidly.

**Solution:** Local tobacco prevention and control staff, Ashley Curtice, Region 6 tobacco control manager, Ernest Watts, Region 8 tobacco control manager and Travis Greer, youth tobacco coordinator for both regions, developed a robust training for potential and existing tobacco prevention stakeholders to increase knowledge of the issues and capacity to advance solutions surrounding tobacco prevention and control. Through their partnerships with

## Quotes

*“Overall the training was excellent! I really enjoyed the American Indian panel discussion. It was very impactful and gave a fresh perspective that I have not heard before.”* -Sarah Arthur, CHES, Health Education Specialist, Lee County Health Department

*“All of the presentations that day were very informative and engaging. The resources provided were very helpful as well and I was able to take back the information to my colleagues.”* -Kerrie Bryant, Substance Use Prevention Health Educator at Pender County Health Department

*“The training gave me a refreshing perspective on tobacco use and prevention as it relates to the youth, military, American Indian populations”*  
-Rigoberto Castellanos  
Public Health Educator I  
Duplin County Health Department

the local American Indian Tribes and the military installations in the area along with their experience with local tobacco control needs, they pulled together a unique training opportunity designed to leave participants knowing what the next steps are and tangible items to take back to their communities.

**Results:** The training began with a warm welcome and a warm-up activity through a gallery walk of data from Sally Herndon, N.C. Tobacco Prevention and Control Branch. Ernest Watts shared a historical perspective on norms and use of tobacco in N.C. Travis Greer shared perspectives on new and emerging tobacco products, including e-cigarettes. Morgan Wittman Gramann, Esq, Executive Director of The N.C. Alliance for Health (NCAH) joined virtually with a presentation on the role of NCAH in N.C. tobacco policy work, past, present and future. Karen Goepfrich, RN, BSN of Fort Bragg took participants through boot camp on tobacco use and prevention efforts in the military population and presenting as if she were speaking to military personnel made for a unique experience for the participants. All agreed the highlight of the agenda was the Tribes Talk Tobacco Panel facilitated by April Whittemore Locklear from the Tuscarora Tribe. The panel featured Carol Brewington from the Coharie Tribe and Chief Michael Jacobs from the Waccamaw Siouan. The panel shared a holistic perspective on traditional and commercial tobacco use in their tribes and community. They also spoke about building relationships with tribes, and the history that public health professionals must overcome to build those relationships. Ashley Curtice concluded the training with a motivational presentation on action steps and personalized tobacco prevention resource playbook that participants could take home with them via a USB. The North Carolina Public Health Training Center at UNC Wilmington College of Health & Human Services' assisted in the development and delivery of the evaluation and contact hours. All 28 evaluations agreed or strongly agreed that their confidence improved to explain the public health impacts associated with new and emerging tobacco products. All of those who completed the evaluation agreed or strongly agreed that their understanding improved on tobacco use, culture and disparities amongst priority populations such as youth, military/veterans, and American Indians.

## Lessons Learned:

- Participants valued the compact, direct tobacco prevention resources that we provided to them on the USB thumb drive.
- Building in more time for networking, questions and discussions would be an asset to the training.

## Contact Information:

- **Ashley Curtice**, MS, Region 6 Tobacco Control Manager, Cumberland County Department of Public Health, 910-433-3852 [acurtice@co.cumberland.nc.us](mailto:acurtice@co.cumberland.nc.us)
- **Ernest Watts**, Region 8 Tobacco Control Manager, Robeson County Department of Public Health, 910-334-1488 [ernest.watts@hth.co.robeson.nc.us](mailto:ernest.watts@hth.co.robeson.nc.us)
- **Travis Greer**, Region 6/8 Tobacco Prevention Coordinator, Cumberland County Department of Public Health, 910-880-0693 [tgreer@co.cumberland.nc.us](mailto:tgreer@co.cumberland.nc.us)

To learn more about smoke-free policies in N.C., visit [www.tobaccopreventionandcontrol.ncdhhs.gov](http://www.tobaccopreventionandcontrol.ncdhhs.gov)



NC DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES**  
Division of Public Health

State of North Carolina • Department of Health and Human Services  
N.C. Division of Public Health • Tobacco Prevention & Control Branch

[www.ncdhhs.gov](http://www.ncdhhs.gov)  
[www.tobaccopreventionandcontrol.ncdhhs.gov](http://www.tobaccopreventionandcontrol.ncdhhs.gov)

*The Department of Health and Human Services does not discriminate on the basis of race, Color, national origin, sex, religion, age or disability in employment on the provision of services*