

Expanding Smokefree Communities

Community Profiles:

Maricopa County, Arizona

Community Overview

The Arizona Smokefree Living Coalition is working to ensure that the over 6,200 residents living in multi-unit housing complexes serving senior, disabled and/or low-income populations in Maricopa County will be protected from secondhand smoke exposure in their homes.

Health Equity Focus

Maricopa County is home to 3.9 million, with approximately 1.1 million of the county's residents living in multi-unit housing.^{1,2} According to surveillance done by the Maricopa County Health Department in 2012, there are 1,049 multi-unit housing properties in the county. Of those 1,049 properties, the Arizona Smokefree Living Coalition is focusing their efforts on a sub-section representing 400 properties and a total target population of 131,584 that includes senior housing, disabled/senior housing and low-income housing (HUD). These populations were targeted because of the high smoking rates within these communities and/or the high health burden they are facing due to exposure to secondhand smoke.

Community Demographics

Located in the south-central region of Arizona, Maricopa County is the state's most populous county and is the nation's fourth largest county in terms of population.³ According to the U.S. Census Bureau, more than half of the state's population resides in Maricopa County. The racial demographics of the county are: 58.3 percent white, non-Hispanic; 30 percent Hispanic/Latinos; 5.4 percent African American; 3.7 percent Asian; and 2.7 percent American Indian and Alaska Native.⁴ The median household income in Maricopa County is \$55,054, which is slightly higher than the state, \$50,448.⁵ The high school graduation average in Maricopa County is 85.6 percent among people 25 years and over, which is comparable to the state average at 85 percent.

Burden of Tobacco Use – The Challenge

Burden of Tobacco Use & Barriers to Accessing Cessation Among Target Population

In Arizona, 15.9 percent of the adult population smokes.⁶ Of the over-65 population, 7.4 percent smoke while 35 percent of Arizona's population with an annual income under \$20,000 smokes.^{7,8} Smoking rates among Hispanics and African Americans (which are disproportionately represented in low-income housing) are 16 and 23 percent respectively.⁹ Smoking rates among the disabled population is nearly 50 percent higher than among people without disabilities.¹⁰

In Arizona, low-income families, people with disabilities and the elderly can receive health care coverage through the state's Medicaid program. Due to the state budget crisis, no new Medicaid applications are being processed for childless adults, leaving this group without health care coverage.¹¹ Adults over 65 are covered through Medicare. Medicaid coverage in Arizona now covers tobacco cessation medications, though there are limits on duration; Arizona Medicaid does not cover group or individual cessation counseling. Medicare now offers smoking cessation to all beneficiaries who smoke (not just those diagnosed with an illness exacerbated by smoking), though they do not offer all three cessation counseling or all seven cessation medication options.¹²

Advancing Health Equity through Smokefree Living – The Solution

Removing smoking from multi-unit housing serving seniors, the disabled, and low-income individuals in Maricopa County, offers a valuable opportunity to improve health outcomes and prevent death and disease. In June 2012, the American Lung Association in Arizona (ALAA) received a sub-award from the American Lung Association National Headquarters under *Expanding Smokefree Communities*, Community Transformation Grants program to work with organizations and residents representing seniors and low-income and disabled individuals residing in multi-unit housing in Maricopa County to reduce exposure to secondhand smoke

Smokefree housing means fewer vulnerable populations exposed to secondhand smoke; fewer people exposed to secondhand smoke means fewer respiratory ailments, ear infections, and heart attacks. All of this equates to a healthier community with lower health care costs. The American Lung Association in Arizona is working in concert with the Arizona Smokefree Living Coalition to make smokefree environments a reality. The Arizona Smokefree Living Coalition Community Leadership Team is comprised of high-level community leaders from multiple sectors who have combined their resources and talent to reduce tobacco-related health disparities among the vulnerable populations living in multi-unit housing currently exposed to deadly secondhand smoke and improve overall health outcomes and reduce costs. These members include representation from the following organizations:

- Maricopa County Department of Public Health Tobacco Use Prevention
- Americans Concerned About Smoking
- American Lung Association in Arizona
- Native Health
- Tiempo Development & Management
- Tanner Community Development Corporation
- Asian Pacific Community in Action

If you would like to find out more or get involved with the educational efforts underway in Maricopa County, please contact the American Lung Association in Arizona at (602) 258-7505 or visit www.AZSmokeFreeLiving.org.

¹ US Census Quick Facts: Maricopa County, 2010: <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/04/04013.html>

² Calculations based on US Census Quick Facts: Maricopa County 2010: Total number of housing units in the county = 1,639,279; Percentage of housing units in multi-unit structures = 25.1%; Persons per household = 2.68; Therefore 411,459 multi-unit housing units x 2.68 persons per household = 1,102,710 people living in multi-unit housing in the county;

³ US Census Quick Facts: Maricopa County, 2010: <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/04/04013.html>

⁴ US Census Quick Facts: Maricopa County, 2010: <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/04/04013.html>

⁵ US Census Quick Facts: Maricopa County, 2010: <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/04/04013.html>

⁶ Centers for Disease Control Tobacco Use State Highlights: Arizona: http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/state_data/state_highlights/2010/states/arizona/index.htm

⁷ Centers for Disease Control Tobacco Use State Highlights: Arizona: http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/state_data/state_highlights/2010/states/arizona/index.htm

⁸ Arizona Department of Health Services, *Adult Tobacco Survey 2005*: http://azdhs.gov/tobaccofreeaz/reports/pdf/05_adult-survey.pdf

⁹ Centers for Disease Control Tobacco Use State Highlights: Arizona:

http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/state_data/state_highlights/2010/states/arizona/index.htm

¹⁰ Centers for Disease Control Press Release, 2007: <http://www.cdc.gov/media/pressrel/2007/r071004.htm>

¹¹ Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System: <http://www.azahcccs.gov/applicants/categories/adults.aspx>

¹² American Lung Association, *Helping Smokers Quit 2011*: <http://www.lung.org/assets/documents/publications/smoking-cessation/helping-smokers-quit-2011.pdf>