



Using Behavioral Risk Factor Survey Data to Plan Smoking Quit Centers in New Jersey

Background

The New Jersey Behavioral Risk Factor Survey (NJBRFS) is the local version of the CDC Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System. The NJBRFS is an anonymous telephone/cell phone survey which has been conducted continuously since 1991. The goal of the survey is to obtain representative data from New Jersey residents on their health status, chronic health conditions, preventive health behavior and health risks. The collected data is used to monitor trends in population health, and is a resource for policy development, program planning and evaluation at the state and local level.

Easy Access to Chronic Disease Data

The NJBRFS data is available through the NJSHAD system; NJSHAD is an online platform that provides access to public health datasets, statistics, and information on the health status of New Jerseyans, <https://www-doh.state.nj.us/doh-shad/query/selection/njbrfs/BRFSSSelection.html>. This system makes the NJBRFS data available to a variety of users, both within and beyond NJDOH. Data are available by respondent demographics (age, race/ethnicity, sex, marital status, employment status, education, and health characteristics), year, and county of residence.

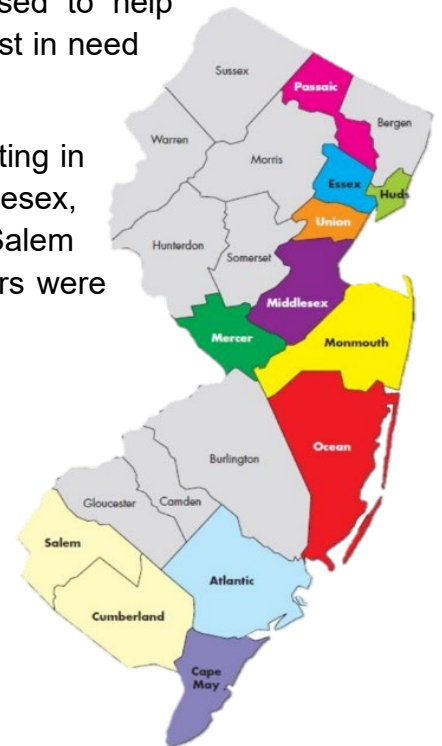
As stated by NJDOH Chronic Disease Program Research Scientist Uta Steinhauser, the availability of NJBRFS data on NJSHAD has pretty much eliminated data requests from community-based organizations. "Previously we would respond to 8-10 requests per year, but now there are none." She further stated that they are using NJSHAD BRFSS data in multiple ways: to support program evaluation; track chronic disease trends; provide data for use in federal grant applications and reports; target interventions both geographically and demographically; create talking points for NJDOH upper management; and respond to media inquiries.

Use of NJBRFS Data to Plan Smoking Quit Centers

BRFS data on current and former smoking status, use of smokeless tobacco, and smoking cessation efforts are available on NJSHAD. Additionally, incidence and prevalence data on related health outcomes such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), cancer, asthma, and heart disease.

NJDOH's Office of Tobacco Control and Prevention (OTCP) has utilized NJSHAD BRFS and other data to target funding and resources for 11 new Quit Centers. Data on smoking prevalence and the prevalence of other co-morbidities were used to help determine where to distribute funds to serve those populations most in need of additional resources.

As depicted in the adjacent map, Quit Centers are currently operating in 12 of NJ's 21 counties: Passaic, Essex, Hudson, Union, Middlesex, Mercer, Monmouth, Ocean, Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland, and Salem Counties. Between July 2020 and May 2022, 4,355 tobacco users were served at the 11 Quit Centers.



Submitted February 2023