

2

CHINESE AND ITALIAN TOBACCO AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

The Health and Emergency Medical Services Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report, August 26, 2004, from the Commissioner of Health Services:

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

1. Health and Emergency Medical Services Committee and Regional Council receive this report for information.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the intent, activities and results of a Chinese and Italian Tobacco Awareness Campaign that took place from November, 2002 through March, 2004 as required by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC).

3. BACKGROUND

The 1996 Report of the Chief Medical Officer of Health for Ontario “Tobacco-Sounding the Alarm” cited that approximately 12,000 Ontarians die each year as a result of tobacco smoke. Consistent findings of tobacco-related research such as Ferrence (1996), Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (1992), and the Centers for Diseases Control in Prevention (1989), further indicate that tobacco prevention and cessation programs have not been developed specifically for ethnic communities. With Chinese and Italian populations being the largest ethno-specific groups identified in York Region, York Region Health Services responded to a request for proposal from the MOHLTC’s Ontario Tobacco Strategy to address this gap in service through the development of a tobacco awareness campaign targeting York Region’s Chinese and Italian communities.

This 17-month initiative had the goal of providing information to the Chinese and Italian communities in York Region related to the health hazards associated with tobacco use and exposure to second-hand smoke. York Region Health Services invited participation from the community through recruiting of an advisory committee for the project. The Chinese and Italian Tobacco Awareness Campaign Advisory Committee, co-chaired by Vaughan Regional Councillor Joyce Frustaglio and former Markham Regional Councillor Tony Wong, included broad-based community representation, such as attorneys, financial professionals and politicians, along with health professionals from the Chinese and Italian communities of York Region.

In the past, Health Services staff had the opportunity to collect baseline data on the Chinese communities in York Region. For example, staff already knew that approximately 20% of York Region tobacco vendors were Chinese, and staff had already built relationships within the Chinese communities through other initiatives. However, there was not as much information on the Italian communities in York Region's knowledge of tobacco issues. Therefore, this project provided the opportunity to collect baseline data from these Italian communities and foster relationships within them.

3.1 Campaign Goals and Objectives

The goals of the Chinese and Italian Tobacco Awareness Campaign focused on:

- Obtaining data on tobacco issues awareness related to Italian and Chinese communities in York Region.
- Increasing awareness within the York Region Chinese and Italian communities of the health hazards associated with tobacco use and second-hand smoke.
- Increasing Chinese vendor compliance with the *Tobacco Control Act, 1994* provisions regarding the sale of tobacco to minors ("Not to Kids").
- Further contributing to the efforts to de-normalize tobacco use.

Specific objectives of the campaign were as follows:

- Develop a comprehensive mass media campaign targeting Chinese and Italian individuals living and working in York Region, using culturally appropriate messages related to smoke-free public places and the ill health effects of second-hand smoke.
- Conduct pre- and post-media campaign tobacco awareness surveys in York Region's Chinese and Italian communities.
- Develop a tobacco cessation strategy in the Chinese community.
- Contribute to the tobacco vendor education program "Not to Kids" by translating and distributing vendor education materials, and later evaluating vendor compliance with the *Tobacco Control Act, 1994*.

3.2 Campaign Activities

3.2.1 Phase One - November 2002 through March 2003

- During the initial phase of the campaign, a needs assessment was conducted to establish baseline data for the Italian and Chinese communities in York Region regarding tobacco awareness issues.
- This was followed by an initial media campaign incorporating TV, radio and print media targeted to both the Chinese and Italian communities.
- A tobacco cessation education initiative was developed targeting the Chinese health care community, specifically physicians, dentists and pharmacists.
- A Chinese media firm translated the "Not to Kids" information related to vendor sales of tobacco to minors.

3.2.2 Phase Two - April 2003 through March 2004

- Further distribution of both Chinese and Italian media campaigns, communicating messages related to environmental tobacco smoke and smoke-free public places, took place in the fall of 2003.
- A tobacco cessation workshop was held with health professionals including physicians, dentists and pharmacists in October 2003 to develop and enhance their counselling skills.
- Translated “Not to Kids” information kits were provided to Chinese tobacco vendors to increase compliance with the *Tobacco Control Act, 1994*.
- Tobacco educational materials were translated into Chinese and distributed to a broad range of Chinese health professionals in December 2003.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

The Chinese and Italian Tobacco Awareness Campaign included an extensive evaluation component with both quantitative and qualitative evaluation strategies. York University’s Institute for Social Research (ISR) conducted a quantitative analysis to measure the effectiveness of the media campaign intervention. Overall, the ISR study noted that support for tobacco control measures remains high in both the Chinese and Italian communities. Knowledge about the effects of smoking on health is high but there is less awareness, particularly among smokers, about the effects of second-hand smoke on health.

The results of this analysis included:

- Half of all respondents report seeing each of the ads. Importantly, smokers, the group for whom the ads were targeted, were more likely to report seeing the ads than non-smokers. For example 77% of Chinese smokers report seeing the “not smoking public places” ad. The figure for Chinese non-smokers was 47%.
- The gap between smokers and non-smokers was not as large for the Italian community. Italian smokers were 9% more likely to report seeing the “not smoking public places” ad than non-smokers (51% and 42% respectively). Five percent more Italian smokers (54%) reported seeing the ad about second hand smoke than non-smokers (49%).
- When asked to indicate the extent to which five health issues are “very important problems,” more respondents continue to say smoking (77%) and second hand smoking (73%) than not being physically active (66%), having poor eating habits (64%) and air pollution (59%).

The results of the pre and post surveys included:

- There was a 3% increase in the number of Chinese smokers and a 5% increase in the number of Italian smokers who saw smoking as a very important health problem.

- The percentage of respondents who think smoking causes cancer remained virtually the same at 80%. As in the first survey, a considerably lower percentage of respondents think second hand smoking causes cancer in non-smokers (53%).
- When it comes to ‘quit smoking’ efforts, as in the first survey support from family and friends (30%) and the use of nicotine replacement therapy (22%) are considered the most helpful aids to quit smoking by Chinese smokers. Italian smokers indicate that health professionals (27%), support from friends (19%) and nicotine replacement therapy (31%) are the methods they would be most likely to use.

Support for tobacco control measures remains high in both the Chinese and Italian communities. Knowledge about the effects of smoking on health is high but there is less awareness, particularly among smokers, about the effect of second hand smoke on health. As in the first survey, differences between smokers and non-smokers tend to be more significant than differences between the Chinese and Italian communities. In general, changes between the first and second survey were limited. Given the short time period between the surveys and the relatively short time period in which the ads ran, the lack of change between the two surveys is not surprising. Information about tobacco related health problems, especially those associated with second hand smoke, need to be reinforced on an ongoing basis in different settings using a myriad of different messages. The York Region Tobacco Awareness Campaign is one part of these efforts and, unlike most previous efforts, has the advantage of being delivered in the local media using the language of the groups the campaign was designed to reach.

Envionics Research was commissioned to complete the final evaluation of the effectiveness of York Region’s Chinese Tobacco Awareness Campaign. This qualitative effort included an evaluation of the Chinese educational materials, an evaluation of the “Not to Kids” translated information for tobacco vendors and an evaluation of the cessation workshop. Focus groups were held to elicit the opinions and perspectives of the members of the Chinese community.

The participants had a number of good ideas on how to improve the effectiveness of specific intervention such as:

- Utilizing smaller groups of 6-8 individuals for workshops.
- Encouraging more participant interaction in workshops.
- Conducting workshops in hospitals to target doctors and patients more effectively, or in malls with heavy Chinese and/or Italian traffic.
- Providing the pamphlets in hospitals and pharmacies.
- Encouraging readers of the pamphlets to talk to their doctors regarding the health impacts of smoking and how to quit.
- Providing an “at-a-glance” page to the Not to Kids kits that summaries key information for vendors.
- Presenting the Not to Kids kits to vendors at a group vendor meeting in order to explain its significance.

These suggestions will assist Health Services staff in designing future programs of a similar nature.

4.1 Campaign Results

The campaign provided an important opportunity for York Region Health Services to understand and overcome language barriers, allowing the building of trust and fostering a working relationship with the communities involved:

- 804 Chinese and Italian community members participated in the pre-survey.
- 1,300 Chinese and Italian community members participated in the post-survey.
- 100 “Not to Kids” kits were translated and distributed to Chinese vendors.
- 100 tobacco educational kits were piloted and distributed to Chinese health professionals.
- Approximately 90 Chinese and Italian community members participated in the tobacco cessation workshops.

Data collected, such as the attitudes and knowledge of smoking issues in Chinese and Italian communities, supports future health related strategic planning, policy and program development that is culturally sensitive and customized for the ethnic groups targeted.

4.2 Campaign Challenges

Although the campaign resulted in valuable information, a number of factors impacted the initiative on the Chinese and Italian communities in York Region. These factors included:

- Provincial funding was announced in the spring of 2002, however, the amount of funding available was not known until later that fall, resulting in the acceleration of project timelines.
- Provincial funding for the media campaign covered only one month of commercials per grant year, thereby allowing only limited time exposure of the messages.
- SARS struck in the spring of 2003 requiring a total redeployment of staff, putting the campaign on hold.
- Competition for media attention in the fall of 2003 with both provincial and municipal elections.

4.3 Relationship to Vision 2026

The Chinese and Italian Tobacco Awareness Campaign addressed diverse populations in York Region by recognizing the particular needs of the Chinese and Italian communities in relation to tobacco awareness issues. In addition, this project clearly responded to the needs of York Region residents by promoting wellness and encouraging healthy lifestyles through tobacco related information, education and prevention initiatives.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

This initiative received 100% funding from the MOHLTC under the Ontario Tobacco Strategy in the amount of \$494,000 over two years. There were no new or incremental costs to The Region as a result of this project.

Table 1
Chinese and Italian Tobacco Awareness Campaign
April 2002 – March 2004

	Two Year Budget	Actuals
Contract Salaries	\$107,200	\$ 72,878
Professional Services (including media purchases for television and print, plus translation services)	221,000	221,995
Evaluation	122,000	116,489
Program Materials and Supplies	43,800	26,691
Total Gross Expenditures	\$494,000	\$438,054
100% Provincial Funding	494,000	438,054
Net Tax Levy	\$ 0	\$ 0

Contract salaries were budgeted based on a full-time project manager position. However, as the project evolved, a part-time project manager was appointed.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

Members of both the Chinese and Italian communities in York Region were directly involved in all aspects of planning and implementation of the Chinese and Italian Tobacco Awareness Campaign. Campaign results will further the work of York Region Health Services with both ethno-specific groups and these continued efforts will potentially benefit all Chinese and Italian Canadian residents of all nine municipalities in York Region.

7. CONCLUSION

The Chinese and Italian Tobacco Awareness Campaign promoted important health messages regarding smoking and the hazards of environmental tobacco smoke to these ethno-specific communities in York Region. Overall, the campaign was another step in York Region Health Services' continued efforts to de-normalize tobacco use. The results of the campaign lay the groundwork for further program development to reduce smoking in York Region.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.