

**TITLE:** Assessing Tobacco Policy Readiness in Local Government Jurisdictions

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**STUDENT SUBMISSION:** No

**TOPIC/TARGET AUDIENCE:** program/project coordinators, tobacco control professionals, public health policy professionals

**ABSTRACT:** Policy can be an effective population-based tool to reduce smoking initiation and use among both youth and adults. Successful policy promotion relies on understanding community readiness. Previous community readiness assessments for Jackson County have been ineffective in guiding Tobacco Prevention and Education Program (TPEP) policy promotion work because they (1) did not take into account the diversity of communities within the county and (2) did not assess specific policy options. In order to inform TPEP strategy development and to more effectively partner with the different governments within the county, Jackson County Public Health conducted a policy readiness assessment for each jurisdiction. An assessment tool and scoring system was created based on the Community Readiness Model and the Tobacco Control Network's Policy Readiness and Stage of Change Assessment. Use of this tool resulted in an individualized assessment of readiness and political feasibility for three areas of tobacco policy for each of the county's jurisdictions. Other counties may find a similar approach helpful in planning and prioritizing tobacco prevention activities. This presentation will cover Jackson County Public Health's experience in developing and implementing the assessment tool, lessons learned in the process, and recommendations for others seeking to assess tobacco policy readiness.

**OBJECTIVE(S):** Discuss the benefits of using a readiness assessment to inform county work plans and strategy development. Describe how the Community Readiness Model can be adapted to assess specific policy approaches. Identify the weaknesses in using a county-wide readiness assessment approach in a county operating under home rule

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