

Panama - Medical Students (3rd Year Students Only) Global Health Professions Student Survey (GHPSS)

FACT SHEET

The Panama medical students GHPSS includes data on prevalence of cigarette smoking and use of other tobacco products, knowledge and attitudes about tobacco use, exposure to second-hand smoke, desire for smoking cessation, and training received during medical school regarding patient counseling on smoking cessation techniques. This information could be very useful in monitoring and developing Panama's comprehensive tobacco control program.

The Panama medical students GHPSS was a census of 3rd year medical students attending the 4 medical schools in Panama that was conducted in 2008. The school response rate was 100% and the student response rate was 85.7%. A total of 285 students participated in the Panama medical students GHPSS.

Prevalence

- 58.8% ever smoked cigarettes (Males = 61.6%, Females = 57.4%)
- 11.1% currently smoke cigarettes (Males = 11.2%, Females = 11.1%)
- 18.0% ever used any form of tobacco other than cigarettes (Males = 22.8%, Females = 15.2%)
- 2.9% currently use any form of tobacco other than cigarettes (Males = 3.6%, Females = 1.9%)
- 19.0% of ever smokers smoked on school premises/property during the past year.
- 3.8% of ever smokers smoked in school buildings during the past year.

Factors Influencing Tobacco Use

- 29.7% were exposed to second-hand smoke at home, during the past week.
- 51.1% were exposed to second-hand smoke in public places during the past week.
- 75.3% reported that their school had a ban on smoking in school buildings and clinics.
- 66.1% reported that their school enforced the ban on smoking in school buildings and clinics.
- 95.4% thought smoking should be banned in all enclosed public places.
- 92.4% thought tobacco sales to adolescents should be banned.
- 71.8% thought there should be a complete ban on advertising tobacco products.
- 69.4% of current smokers wanted to stop smoking.
- 24.9% of current smokers ever received help/advice to stop smoking cigarettes.
- 90.3% were taught about the dangers of smoking during medical school training.

Role Model and Cessation Training

- 96.0% thought health professionals serve as role models for their patients.
- 100.0% thought health professionals have a role in giving advice about smoking cessation to patients.
- 26.1% received formal training in smoking cessation approaches during medical school.
- 94.6% thought health professionals should get specific training on cessation techniques.

Highlights

Over 1 in 10 currently smoke cigarettes and 2.9% currently use other tobacco products.

Seven in 10 smokers indicated that they want to quit.

Over half were exposed to smoke in public places.

More than 9 in 10 support a ban on smoking in all enclosed public places.

Over one-quarter received training to provide patients with cessation approaches.

More than 9 in 10 think health professionals should get specific training on cessation techniques to use with patients.