

Conference Poster Abstract

Knowledge, attitudes, and practices regarding smoke-free policies in multi-unit housing in Georgia

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Background: Nonsmokers living in multi-unit housing (MUH) without a smoke-free (SF) policy are vulnerable to secondhand and thirdhand smoke exposure. This study aimed to investigate the presence and type of SF policies in MUH in Georgia. Another aim was to explore knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes of property managers and owners (PM/Os) regarding SF MUH policies, including e-cigarettes.

Methods: Throughout 2015 PM/Os of MUH in Savannah and Atlanta were surveyed regarding SF policies in MUH. A list with contact information of PM/Os was obtained from the ASDE Survey Sampler. The participants were mailed an invitation letter and were called one week later to schedule the interview. To be eligible, the participant must have been an English-speaking adult working as a PM/O in MUH. The survey administered was adapted from a survey designed by CDC's Office on Smoking and Health. All survey data were entered into SPSS and analyzed using SAS.

Results: The greatest number of the 91 PM/Os surveyed were female (70.3%) and/or white (48.4%), with an average age of 41.7 years. Most properties were market-rate (71.3%) or were a mix of market-rate and subsidized units (17.2%). Forty-one PM/Os reported some smoking restriction, while 50 had no policy. Properties mainly prohibited smoking in common outdoor areas (n=18) or inside individual apartments (n=13). Policies included bans of non-cigarette combustible products (n=19), hookah (n=12), e-cigarettes (n=7), and smokeless tobacco (n=5). Most PM/Os reported high compliance and positive resident reactions to the policy. Comparing responses by policy status, no differences in knowledge nor support for tobacco control legislation were found, except for SF outdoor seating in restaurants, which was more frequently supported by PM/Os with smoking restrictions. Personal beliefs on restricting use of cigarettes and e-cigarettes in MUH did not differ significantly by policy status, but those with a SF policy were more supportive of prohibiting smokeless tobacco use in MUH.

Conclusions: Implementing smoke-free policies in multi-unit housing is feasible and is generally supported by residents.

doi: 10.21633/jgpha.6.009

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