Improving Information Exchange with At-Risk Populations

People with Heart and Lung Disease, Older Adults, and Children

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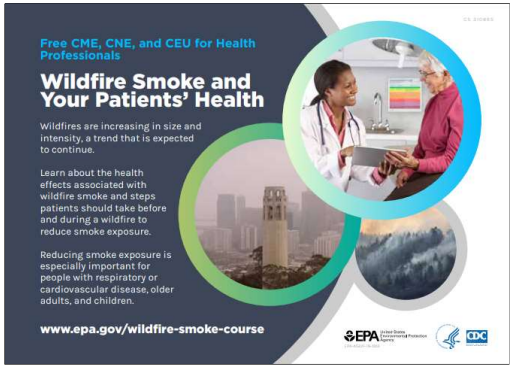
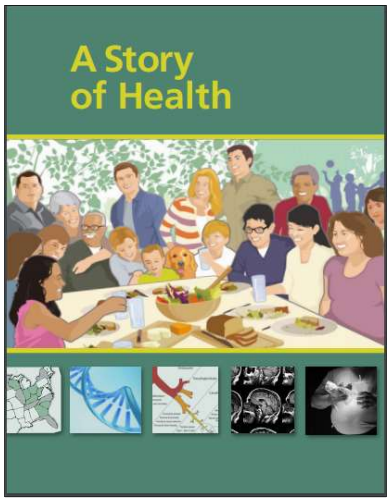
Wildfire Smoke: A Guide for Public Health Officials and Factsheets

Health Providers

- People more likely to act when informed by health providers
  - Few health providers discuss air quality
- Continuing education for health providers
  - EPA/CDC *Wildfire Smoke and Your Patients' Health* web course
  - Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Units (PEHSU) CME – *A Story of Health* under development
- Other information sources
  - Health insurance companies - direct messages and chronic disease coaches
  - Enabling agents - medical posters, television videos, factsheets





Wen et al., J Community Health. 2009, 34. Mirabelli et al., Am J Prev Med 2018, 54. Davis et al., JAMA, 1999,282.

Electronic Medical Records

- Electronic Medical Records (EMR) systems
  - General: preparedness messages - information about AQI, exposure reduction measures, symptoms of concern
  - Specific: smoke action plan templates - working with medical associations, develop templates for at-risk groups (e.g., asthma action plan)
    - In-person education/planning
    - Document plan in medical records
    - Two-way communication
    - Alerts - remind patient about smoke season, or to trigger enactment of smoke action plan with link
    - Follow-up survey about usefulness of action plan and/or update each year

Schools, Daycares and Camps

Exposure reduction information

- Expert workgroups underway and 2021 workshop planned to make recommendations to reduce children's smoke exposure: respirator use, improved IAQ in schools, school activity guidelines, and air quality sensor use
  - Deliver exposure reduction information through professional groups and licensing authorities

Forecasts

- Seasonal forecasts - stimulate preparation (e.g., school IAQ evaluations)
- Daily forecasts - late afternoon and early morning forecasts most useful (think snow days)
  - Generally forecasts generated about 7:30-8 am
  - Incident command ➡ AQ agencies ➡ Health agencies ➡ Schools
  - Too late to make decisions about closures/cancellations
- Hourly forecasts - help with decisions about outdoor activities

Photos courtesy of Ali Kamal and Kathleen Stewart, US EPA

Summary

- Information exchange most important with groups at-risk from smoke exposure
- Most effective way to reach these groups is through health providers
  - Health providers are trusted information source
- Useful tools
  - Development of Smoke Action Plan tool - in-person planning and education
  - EMR systems - documentation/communication
  - Clinic materials (medical poster and videos) - education
  - Insurance companies - notifications and education
- Reaching schools, daycares, and camps important for protecting children
  - Exposure reduction information being developed
  - Improved forecasts (timing and temporal specificity) would be helpful