

# Treatment Barrier in Overdose Crisis: A Critical Participatory Action Study of an Inpatient Smoking Ban

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## What Is the Purpose of this Study/Review?

- To explore the impacts of a total ban on cigarette smoking in substance use treatment facilities on individual's willingness to seek or leave inpatient treatment.

## What Is the Problem?

- Over the last 20 years, almost 1 million people have died from drug overdoses in the United States.
- The majority of people with substance use disorders who seek inpatient treatment find the process of quitting cigarettes at the same time to be daunting.
- People who can afford private health care can choose whether they want to go to a facility that allows cigarettes smoking. Those reliant on government health care have few to no choices.
- Smoking ban policies may be creating a barrier to treatment for poor people during an overdose public health epidemic.

## What Are the Findings?

- Slightly less than one-half of the people in the study said that smoking policies had been a factor in past treatment decisions.
- One-half of participants said that smoking policies would be a factor in future decisions about seeking treatment.
- For the majority of people, who recently left inpatient treatment early, smoking was a factor in their decision.

## Who Should Care Most?

- Advocacy organizations for people who use alcohol and other drugs.
- City and state policymakers.
- Substance use treatment providers.
- Substance use treatment researchers.
- Insurance providers.

## Recommendations for Action

- Meaningfully engage people with substance use disorders during treatment policy formulation processes.
- Further research the impacts of smoking bans on barriers or willingness to seek treatment.
- Explore treatment policy options that meet people where they are in terms of their readiness to quit smoking.