

Mental Illness Among Individuals Who Smoke in Kansas

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BACKGROUND

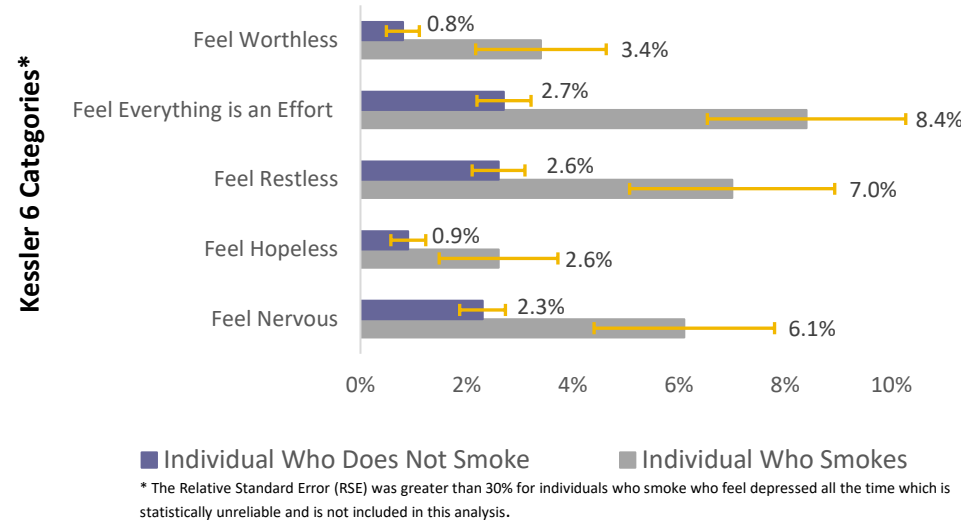
Mental illnesses are commonly diagnosed. Kessler 6 Psychological Distress scale questions were asked on the 2020 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) survey for Kansas due to widespread interest in mental illness across the state. Because adults with mental illness are more likely to smoke, the goal of this study was to understand the different levels of mental illness in relation to individuals who smoke versus those who do not.



METHODS

2020 Kansas BRFSS directly asked all Kessler 6 Psychological Distress scale questions. Each answer was scored 0 (less severe) to 4 (more severe). A total score for all 6 questions for each individual was calculated. An overall score of 0-7 means no mental illness, 8-12 means mild to moderate mental illness, and 13-24 means serious mental illness. Individuals were also questioned about current smoking status. Descriptive statistics and Chi-square tests were used for analysis of these variables.

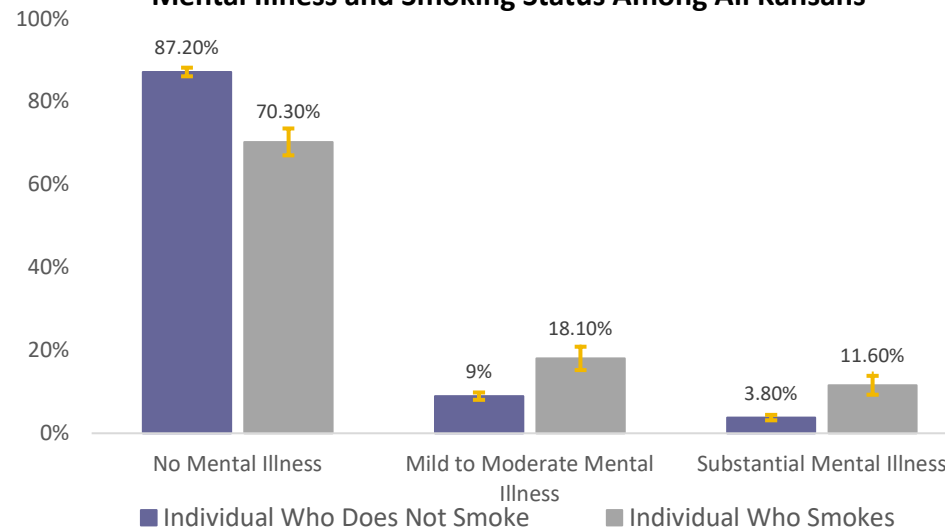
Percentage of Individuals Who Feel This Way All the Time



RESULTS

Statistically significant results among individuals who smoke versus those who do not among all three levels of mental illness were obtained. As the severity of mental illness increased, the proportion of individuals who smoke also increased (14% [95% CI: 13, 15.1] no mental illness; 28.9% [95% CI: 24.8, 33] mild to moderate mental illness; 37.9% [95% CI: 31.5, 44.2] serious mental illness). There were over 2.5 times more individuals who smoke than who do not who felt nervous, hopeless, and restless all the time, respectively, over 3 times more individuals who smoke than who do not who felt depressed or everything was an effort all the time, respectively, and over 4 times more individuals who smoke than who do not who felt worthless all the time, respectively.

Mental Illness and Smoking Status Among All Kansans



CONCLUSION

Smoking is more prevalent among people with mental illness compared to individuals who do not smoke. Continuing to make cessation among the behavioral health population a priority is necessary in order to make progress in this area.

SOURCE

Kansas Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (KS BRFSS), 2020. Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Bureau of Health Promotion.