Funding:

The ITC New Zealand/EASE Project is supported by the New Zealand Health Research Council (HRC 19/641), the Canadian Institute for Health Research (FDN-148477), and the National Cancer Institute (P01 CA200512). Additional support was provided to Geoffrey T. Fong from a Senior Investigator Award from the Ontario Institute for Cancer Research.

Disclosures/Conflict of Interest:

GF has served as an expert witness or consultant for governments defending their country's policies or regulations in litigation and has served as paid expert consultant to the Ministry of Health of Singapore in reviewing the evidence of plain/standardized packaging. All other authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

Smoking related knowledge, quit attempts and intentions, regret, and perceived addiction among people who smoke in Aotearoa New Zealand:

Findings from the ITC NZ (EASE) 2020-21 survey

Richard Edwards¹, Janine Nip¹, Jane Zhang¹, Andrew Waa¹, James Stanley¹, Jude Ball¹, El-Shadan Tautolo², Thomas Agar³, Anne C.K. Quah³, Geoffrey T. Fong^{3,4}

¹ University of Otago Wellington, New Zealand, ² Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand, ³ University of Waterloo, Canada,

⁴ Ontario Institute for Cancer Research, Canada

International Tobacco Control Policy Evaluation Project

BACKGROUND

- Aotearoa New Zealand has a Smokefree Aotearoa goal to reduce smoking prevalence to less than 5% for all peoples by 2025.
- Daily smoking prevalence in 2021/22 was 8%, but was substantially higher among Māori (the Indigenous peoples) (20%) and Pacific peoples (18%).
- There is a comprehensive government action plan to achieve the Smokefree Aotearoa goal, including mandating minimal nicotine levels in smoked tobacco products from 2025.

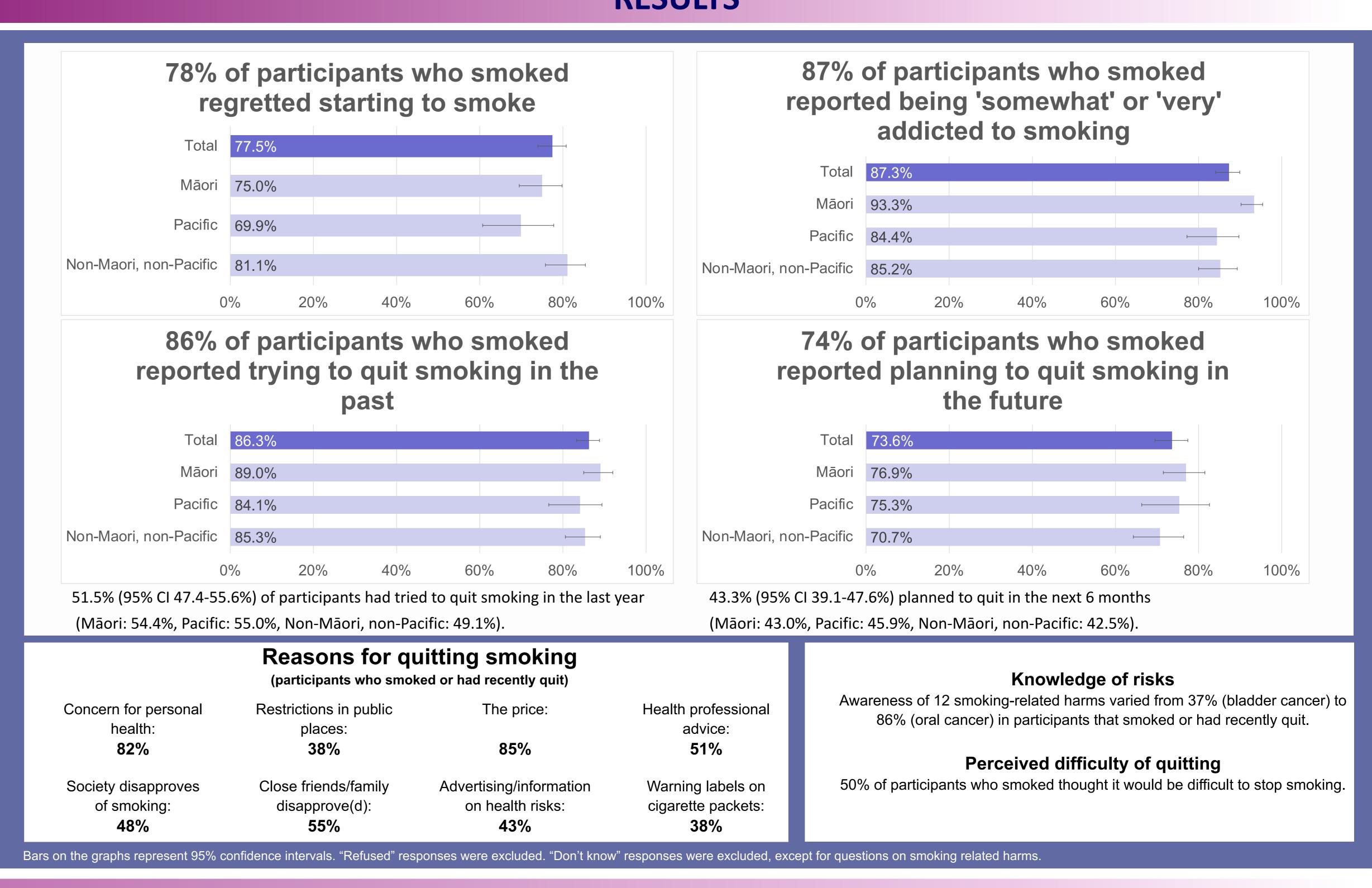
OBJECTIVE

To assess key knowledge, motivations, beliefs, and behaviors among people who smoked or had recently quit smoking and investigate how these vary by ethnicity.

METHODS

- Data were from Wave 3 of the ITC NZ (EASE) study, conducted online (Oct 2020-Feb 2021).
- Participants were: 700 people who smoked daily, 292 people who smoked less than daily, and 238 people who had recently quit smoking. Participants included 492 Māori and 238 Pacific peoples.
- Estimates were weighted to reflect Aotearoa New Zealand's population of people who currently smoke and recently quit smoking, including weighting for age, sex, and ethnicity.

RESULTS



CONCLUSIONS

- Most participants regretted starting to smoke, had tried to quit smoking, and intended to quit in the future. These outcomes did not differ significantly by ethnicity.
- However, most participants who smoked believed they were addicted to smoking, with a slightly higher prevalence of this belief among Māori. Additionally, about half of the participants who smoked thought it would be difficult to quit.
- These findings support the need for, and potential efficacy of, measures in the Smokefree Aotearoa Action Plan which aim to facilitate quitting, including mandated denicotinization of smoked tobacco products.







Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco Annual Meeting March 1-4, 2023, San Antonio, Texas, USA Contact: Richard Edwards (<u>richard.edwards@otago.ac.nz</u>)

