



28-Day Rapid Response Survey & Report: Effective Use of Strategic Partnerships

Tobacco products are cheap, readily available, and heavily marketed in stores. This promotes tobacco use to Oregon's youth and makes it difficult for current smokers to stop. The Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Prevention Section is approaching strategies in the tobacco retail environment through two mechanisms. The first is a statewide requirement in the regular annual funding stream (core Tobacco Prevention and Education Program or TPEP) awarded to all Local Public Health Authorities. The second strategy is a special funding stream (SPArC Tobacco-Free) for select counties to focus exclusively on tobacco retail policy advancement. The Tobacco Retail Evaluation (TRE) supports this work through ongoing systematic assessment and reporting. The TRE is guided by a small panel (TRE user panel) of Oregon tobacco control practitioners and facilitated by the Rede Group.

TRE
Tobacco Retail
Evaluation

Introduction

Strategic Partnerships

Identifying and engaging partners is the foundation for effective policy change processes. Partner engagement can help ensure that sectors of the community, with a stake in improving health, have equal access to the policy change process. Strategic partner engagement may take different forms, including task forces, coalitions, and informally structured groups of partners. Strategic partner engagement differs from public or community engagement in that partner engagement typically happens with a smaller group of organizations who:

- Have a stake in the policy issue at hand;
- Represent trusted, respected, or important voices in the community;
- Provide policy input (especially around Health Equity);
- Offer tactical advice; and

- Actively work to accomplish the objective, frequently taking on activities, such as lobbying, that may be more appropriate for non-governmental organizations.

Strategic partners have a desire to reduce tobacco use and are involved in multiple aspects of the policy initiative, often from start to finish.

Questions about Strategic Partnerships

Rede worked with the TRE user panel to conduct this 28-Day Rapid Response Survey and Report* to gather information and perspectives from **TPEP and SPArC Tobacco-Free Grantees** about their level of **engagement with strategic partners**. In May 2017, Rede conducted this survey, which received responses from 31 of the 34 (91%) TPEP and SPArC grantees.

58%

of respondents have engaged partners through a tobacco coalition or community coalition whose mission is broader than tobacco prevention

52%

of respondents have engaged partners in talking with decision makers about policy change

26%

of respondents have a leadership role on a coalition

Findings

Grantees Worked with the Following Types of Coalitions

- Drug-free communities coalitions (and in at least one instance a subgroup of the coalition dedicated to tobacco prevention) (26%)
- Local Coordinated Care Organizations (CCOs) or an advisory group associated with the CCO (16%)
- Regional Health Equity coalitions (10%)
- Community partners/coalitions focused on “healthy lifestyles,” “making the healthy choice the easy choice where we live, work, learn and play,” or “policy, systems, and environmental change” (10%)
- Tobacco prevention coalitions (6%)
- A coalition that is an offshoot of a local alcohol/drug rehabilitation organization (3%)

How Grantees Decided Which Partners to Engage

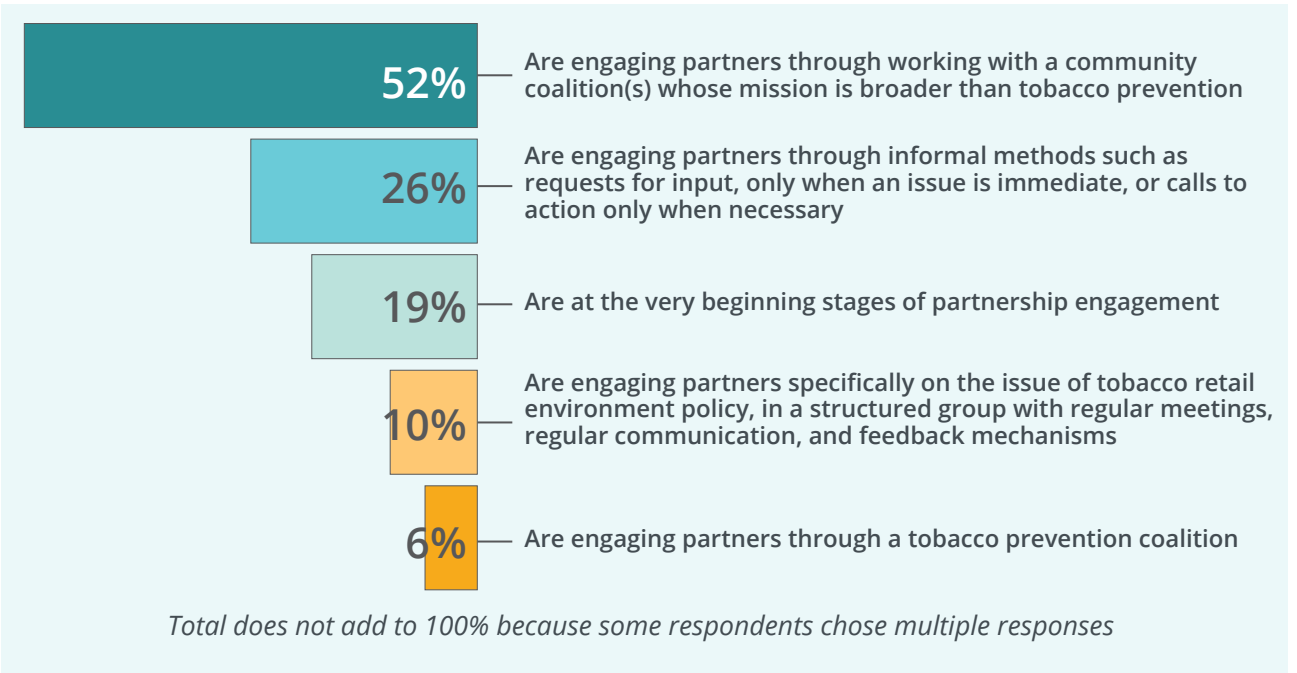
Grantees engaged:

- Individuals and organizations that had shown interest or shared similar goals for tobacco control efforts (29%)
- Partners they worked with in the past (10%)
- Based on identification of key decision makers, established coalitions, or leadership groups (10%)
- Based on audience or power mapping (6%)

Benefits to Engaging Partners in Tobacco Retail Environment Policy Strategies

- 65% realized benefits from partner engagement such as:
 - Providing expertise about their communities (25%)
 - Playing a key role in influencing decision makers (20%)
 - Communicating the issue to a larger audience (20%)

Structure of Partner Engagement for Tobacco Retail Environment Policy Work (n=31)



- Other benefits (15%)
- Identifying additional supporters (15%)
- Taking on time consuming activities such as surveying retailers (5%)
- 19% have not engaged
- 16% have not realized benefits

Challenges to Engaging Partners in Tobacco Retail Environment Policy Strategies

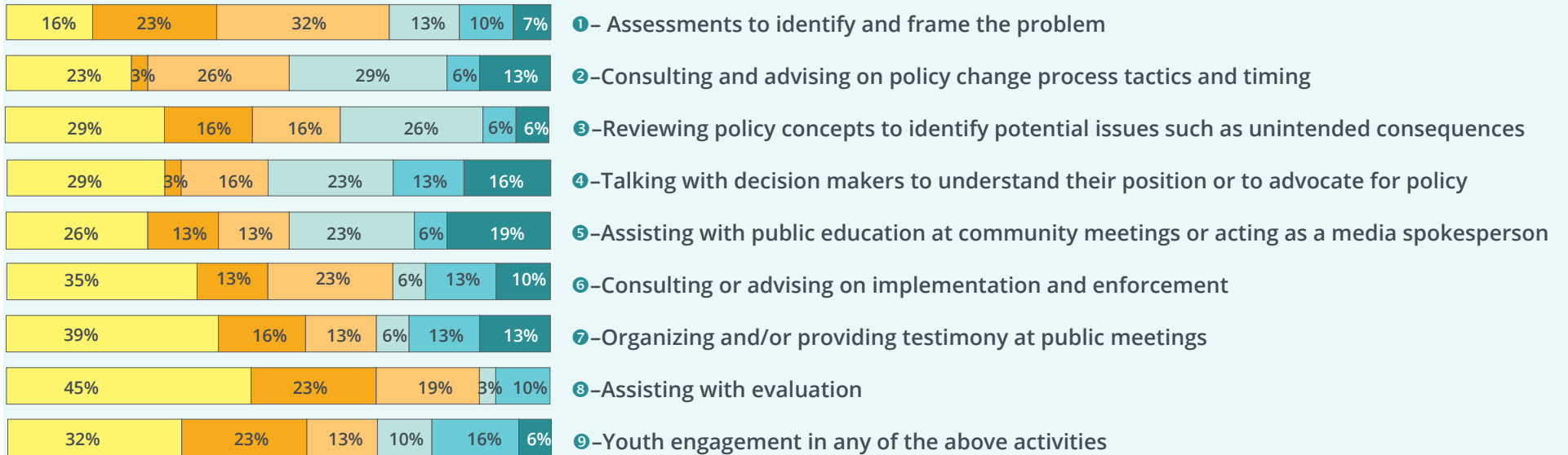
- A belief that the community does not see tobacco retail policies as a priority (33%)
- Finding that partners are hesitant due to potential political repercussions (23%)
- Difficulty finding the right partners, keeping them engaged, educating partners, and finding the time to meet (23%)
- Partners’ concern about policy enforcement (6%)

“The policies would not have passed and would be less effective without partner engagement.”

—Grantee

Findings

Extent of Partner Engagement (n=31) Grantees were asked to rate their level of partner engagement in the following nine activities.



Key

- Not applicable – Have not yet reached this stage
- No engagement – Partners were not engaged in these types of activities
- Limited engagement – TPEP provided updates to partners via email or verbal updates, either regularly or when something noteworthy was happening
- Some engagement – TPEP has two-way communication whereby partners are encouraged to connect and participate
- Moderate engagement – TPEP collaborated with partners to develop strategies and tactics for these types of activities and/or partners were involved as messengers or spokespeople
- High engagement – TPEP worked with partners to share decision-making for the types of activities listed in the above engagement levels

The following grantees indicated a high level of engagement in one or more of the above activities. Consider contacting your peers in the following counties to learn about their engagement efforts in specific activities:

Benton	5	7							
Clatsop	5	9							
Crook	1								
Deschutes	2	3	6						
Jefferson	5								
Klamath	4	7							
Lane	2	4	5	6	7				
Multnomah	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	9	
Tillamook	2	4	5						

High Engagement

Grantees who are further along the policy change process, (past stage four - community outreach, engagement, & education (n=7)) are more likely to have high engagement with partners in the following activities than grantees who are not as far along in the process:

- Talking with decision makers to understand their position or to advocate for policy (11 times more likely)

- Consulting or advising on implementation and enforcement (6 times more likely)
- Assisting with public education (4 times more likely)
- Assessments to identify and frame the problem (3 times more likely)
- Reviewing policy concepts to identify potential issues (3 times more likely)
- Identified partners for the specific purpose of working on tobacco retail policy together (2 times more likely)

Insights from Grantees

- Engaged partners are necessary to successful policy work
- In assessment of retailers, having partner involvement has helped us to be received better by retailers
- Partners are willing to adapt to change if they have education on how it will help their overall health or the health of their employees
- Engaging with partners helps to better understand each local community and how best to approach the decision makers
- Engaging partners helps to identify supporters of TRL policy change
- Engaging partners is really the best/only way to move TRL policies ahead
- The policies would not have passed without partner engagement and policies would be less effective without partner input and engagement

“We have seen a significant need for education around the tobacco retail environment, its impact on tobacco use, and policy best practices to address it.”

—Grantee

Recommendations

How TPEP Grantees Can Use Information from this Report

- + **Paying particular attention to the categories in the chart on page 3, think about ways to increase or improve partner engagement. Reach out to peers that practice high engagement to learn more about their activities and experiences.**
- + **Share this information with partners as a way to further discussions about partner engagement in tobacco retail policy.**
- + **Join the TRE webinar to hear more about these findings from Rede and the User Panel.**
- + **Use results from the survey to inform a discussion with your Regional Support Network. (If you would like to see how your region’s partner engagement compares to the rest of the state contact Rede to request a specific report).**
- + **Share information with health department leadership to plan/strategize partner engagement.**

“Engaging with partners helps us to better understand each local community and how best to approach the decision makers.”

—Grantee

How HPCDP Can Use Information from this Report

- + **Continue to offer grantees tools and support to enhance skills in partnership building.**

*This is a rapid response evaluation that follows a four-step process completed over the course of 28 days.

The process includes:

1. Develop the survey instrument
2. Collect survey responses
3. Analyze survey responses
4. Report survey findings

The purpose of this evaluation method is to collect information from grantees to report and share findings quickly so those findings can be used in grantee’s current and future work to implement tobacco retail policy.

This report is the third in a series of 28-Day Rapid Response Survey and Reports that Rede Group has conducted on various topics that contribute to and inform the larger Tobacco Retail Evaluation.

