OVERCOMING STIGMA:
HOW TO TALK TO PEOPLE WITH LUNG CANCER?

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You say: My Mom has lung cancer.

The response you hear is?
Someone says: "I have Breast Cancer"
OMG, I'm so sorry.
Someone says: "I have Prostate Cancer"
Oh no, that's just awful!
Someone says: "I have Lung Cancer"
Did You Smoke?
IMAGINE IF YOU GOT BLAMED FOR HAVING CANCER.

END THE STIGMA & DISCRIMINATION OF MENTAL ILLNESS @ bringchange2mind.org
WHAT IS STIGMA?

- STIGMA
  - A mark of shame or discredit (Marriam-Webster)

- HEALTH RELATED STIGMA
  - A social process or related personal experience characterized by exclusion, rejection, blame, or devaluation that results from experience or reasonable anticipation of an adverse social judgment about a person or group identified with a particular health problem (Weiss & Ramakrishna, 2006).
INTERNAL VS EXTERNAL HEALTH RELATED STIGMA

- **Internal stigma**
  - Blame yourself for what is happening

- **External stigma**
  - Feel blame from other people for what is happening
INTERACTIVE QUESTION

What percentage of patients with lung cancer feel stigmatized for their disease?
HEALTH RELATED STIGMA IN ADVANCED LUNG CANCER

A brief look
### HRS IN ADVANCED LUNG CANCER

- 62 people
- All diagnosed with lung cancer
- Treatment in middle Tennessee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age (years)</td>
<td>64.45</td>
<td>8.69</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>60%</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>American Indian/Alaskan Native</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>6%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>White</td>
<td>87%</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Residence</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>40%</td>
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## HRS IN ADVANCED LUNG CANCER

### Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have you ever smoked?</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you quit smoking</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>11%</td>
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### Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>IQR</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How many years did you smoke?</td>
<td>15-40</td>
<td>27.50</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>52</td>
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<tr>
<td>How long ago did you quit smoking?</td>
<td>4-29</td>
<td>15.50</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many cigarettes did you smoke per day?</td>
<td>20-40</td>
<td>22.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>60</td>
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</table>
I feel that some people avoid me because I have lung cancer.  
69.4% 30.6%

I feel that some people feel awkward and tense around me because I have lung cancer.  
46.8% 53.2%

I feel there is a stigma that goes with my condition.  
46.8% 53.2%

I feel that most people think less of a person who has lung cancer.  
56.5% 43.5%
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perception</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
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<tr>
<td>I feel I am to blame for my disease.</td>
<td>58.1%</td>
<td>41.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>I feel other people think I am to blame for my disease.</td>
<td>40.3%</td>
<td>59.7%</td>
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</table>
Between 30 to 60% of patients diagnosed with lung cancer feel some kind of health related stigma because of their diagnosis.
ANOTHER WAY TO LOOK AT IT

For every 10 people diagnosed with lung cancer, 3 to 6 will feel some type of stigma.
INTERACTIVE QUESTION

Has anyone here had *zero* experiences with some type of lung cancer related stigma?
LUNG CANCER STIGMA AND THE MEDIA

Is the media making the problem worse?
WARNING

THE FOLLOWING PHOTOGRAPHS INCLUDE GRAPHIC IMAGERY
WHAT DOES THE MEDIA DO FOR STIGMA ASSOCIATED WITH LUNG CANCER?

- Graphic anti-smoking campaigns on TV and online
- CDC (2012-2016)
  - Documents individuals with health problems due to smoking
  - Lung cancer: Rose & Annette
  - North Carolina: Terrie with head and neck cancer

- Other countries and organizations also have graphic ads that are available via the internet
WHY THE GRAPHIC ANTI-SMOKING CAMPAIGNS?

- They work
- Large meta-analysis of 127 studies with a total of 27,372 people
- Conclusion:
  - Fear appeals positively influence attitude, intentions and behaviors
  - Almost always effective
  - No identified circumstances when they backfired

WHAT ABOUT THE CDC ADS?

SMOKING AND CANCER IN THE MEDIA
SMOKING AND CANCER IN THE MEDIA

If you can't stop smoking, cancer will...
1 in every 8 people die from cancer caused by smoking each year.

call: 0800 082 4335 or visit smokefree.nhs.uk for information about quitting today.
SMOKING AND CANCER IN THE MEDIA

“Look at the power of the cigarette... Remember this face and that smoking killed me.”

Barb Tarbox died at 42 of lung cancer caused by smoking.

You can quit. We can help.
1-888-888-8888
internet/url.ca

Health Canada
SMOKING AND CANCER IN THE MEDIA

WARNING

This is what dying of lung cancer looks like.

Barb Tarbox died at 42 of lung cancer caused by cigarettes.

You can quit. We can help.

1-866-366-3667
gosmokefree.gc.ca/quit

Health Canada
Early conclusion: It does not work for marginalized groups
WHAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT IT?

Thanks for the info but....what can I do?
ADMIT YOUR OWN FEELINGS FIRST

• Do you blame your loved one?

• Have you admitted that out loud?
  • Or even to yourself?

• Some thoughts you may have:
  • If she hadn’t smoked we wouldn’t be going through this!
  • I tried to get him to quit for years and he wouldn’t listen to me!
  • She knew what smoking would do.
  • He chose this so he deserves to suffer.
INTERACTIVE QUESTION

Do you blame your loved one for their disease?

(Even a little?)
WORK THROUGH YOUR FEELINGS

- Caregivers go through the stages of grief after a lung cancer diagnosis too
- Being a caregiver is no joke! It’s hard!
- The goal is acceptance of the diagnosis
- What’s done is done and cannot be changed
- Find the new normal and move forward
EDUCATE OTHER PEOPLE

- Be a one man band!
- They say: Did you/they smoke?
  - You say: That’s an interesting question. Do you have some time for to share some lung cancer facts with you?
Never smokers get lung cancer.

People who quit smoking a long time ago get lung cancer.

Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer. Have you had your house checked for radon? You can get a free kit.

Smoking status doesn’t change the experience me/my mom/my grandpa is going through.

It’s important to me to reduce the stigma people with lung cancer feel after a diagnosis. Asking that question can be very hurtful to some people. (cracks a joke) We don’t ask women with breast cancer when their last mammogram was!
WHAT DO I SAY TO THE PERSON WITH LUNG CANCER?

- Ask them about stigma
  - Asking isn’t going to cause feelings of stigma or blame
  - Listen to what they say
  - Validate their feelings

- If someone you love does express they feel stigmatized know your resources
  - Nurse 😊
  - Social worker
  - Oncologist
  - Local or state support groups
  - Online support groups
  - Patient matching programs
WHAT DO I DO FOR THE PERSON WITH LUNG CANCER?

- Understand that lung cancer related HRS is associated with
  - Depression
  - Anxiety
  - Lower quality of life

- Help the patient get connected

- Encourage the person to speak to a health care provider about the feelings and ask for resources
  - Nurse 😊
QUESTIONS?