

California Adult Consumer Survey Pharmacies and Drugstores Selling Tobacco Products — Phase II



Executive Summary

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Pharmacies and chain drugstores market themselves as health-oriented businesses. Their basic mission to maintain and enhance health is directly contradicted by the promotion and sale of tobacco products. These data indicate that pharmacies need not sell tobacco products for economic reasons nor as a convenience for customers. Consumer opinion opposing the promotion and sale of tobacco products in drug stores has remained stable between 1997 and 2000, and the proportion of smokers opposed to this practice has risen significantly.

The Pharmacy Partnership¹ (PhP), a coalition of pharmacists, physicians, health care professionals and consumers, is working to eliminate the sale and advertising of all tobacco products in California pharmacies and drugstores.

In addition, the Pharmacy Partnership seeks to:

- Increase pharmacist involvement in tobacco control, cessation and prevention activities.
- Diminish social acceptance of tobacco sales and promotion in drugstores through increasing consumer awareness.

This report details the results from scientific surveys conducted in 1997 and 2000 to study public opinion in the state regarding the sale and promotion of tobacco products in pharmacies and drugstores.

Methodology

- In 1997, 925 telephone interviews were conducted with randomly selected residents, 18 years of age and older, in five California counties: San Joaquin, Orange, Sonoma, San Mateo, and San Luis Obispo. In the 2000 survey, San Diego was added to the original five counties, and 988 telephone interviews with California consumers were completed.

¹The Pharmacy Partnership is a state-wide project of the California Medical Association Foundation, funded by the Tobacco Tax Health Protection Act of 1988 – Proposition 99, under grant # 94-20949, awarded by the California Department of Health Services, Tobacco Control Section.

- The response rates for these surveys were 75.14% in 1997 and 69.40% in 2000. Both are excellent rates for a Random Digit Dial (RDD) survey. Response rates this high support generalizations from sample data to the combined county populations.
- The confidence interval for both surveys is approximately plus or minus 2.75%. That is, we are 95% confident that the true population parameter (the result we would obtain if we interviewed every California consumer in the six counties) lies between 2.75% below and 2.75% above the sample statistics reported here.

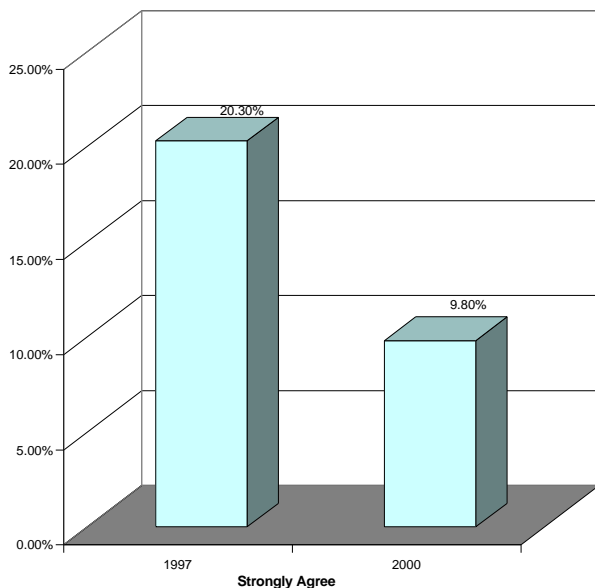
Key Results

Knowledge, Attitudes and Beliefs

Results from both the 1997 and 2000 surveys indicate that most California consumers are not in favor of the sale of tobacco products in pharmacies and drugstores.

- In 1997, 69.9% (seven out of ten) California Consumers either “Disagree” or “Strongly Disagree” with the statement, “I am in favor of tobacco products being sold in drugstores.” In the 2000 survey, this figure increases slightly to 72.3%.

I am in Favor of the Sale of Tobacco Products in Drugstores (Among Smokers)



- 1997 data showed just one in five (20.3%) smokers “Strongly Agree” with the sale of tobacco products in drugstores. Survey results in 2000 reveal a *significant decrease* to one in ten (9.8%) smokers who “Strongly Agree” (See Graphic).
- Conversely, among smokers surveyed in 1997, 34.5% “Disagree” or “Strongly Disagree” with the sale of tobacco products in drugstores. In 2000, the percentage of smokers who “Disagree” or “Strongly Disagree” *increased* to 49.7%.

- Among respondents who “Disagree” with the sale of tobacco products in pharmacies and drugstores, in both study years, about one third (31.4% in 1997 and 32.3% in 2000) specifically state that this practice is inconsistent with health promotion.

As one survey respondent put it:

“It’s like selling death!”

- 1997 results placed pharmacists as the 3rd most likely source of health information, after doctors and books or articles on medical topics. 2000 data indicates that pharmacists are now regarded as the 4th source of health information, after doctors, nurses, and books or articles on medical topics.

Neither smokers nor non-smokers believe that it is appropriate for pharmacies and drugstores to display ads and promotions for tobacco products.

- The sale of tobacco by pharmacies has an impact on public perceptions of the profession:

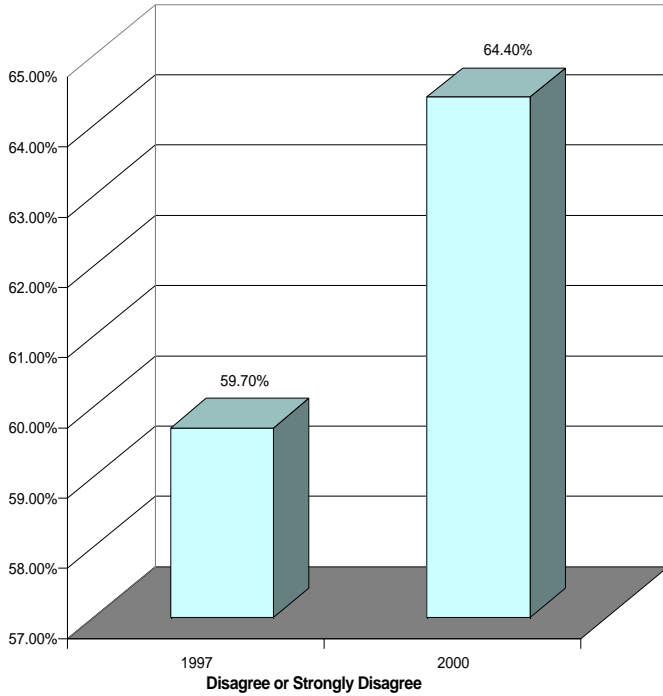
“It sends mixed messages and undermines the credibility of the pharmacist.”

“You are supposed to go to a drugstore for health products not health problems.”

“Pharmacies are places to improve your health, not destroy it!”

- More than four out of five non-smokers in the 1997 and 2000 surveys “Disagree” or “Strongly Disagree” with the propriety of tobacco ads and promotions in drugstores.

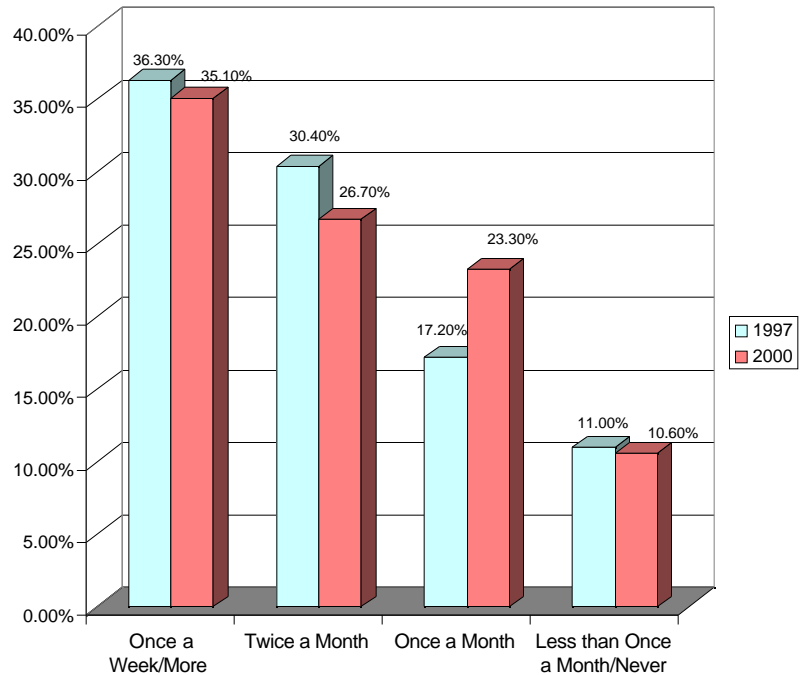
It is Appropriate for Pharmacies and Drugstores to Display Ads and Promotions for Tobacco Products (Among Smokers)



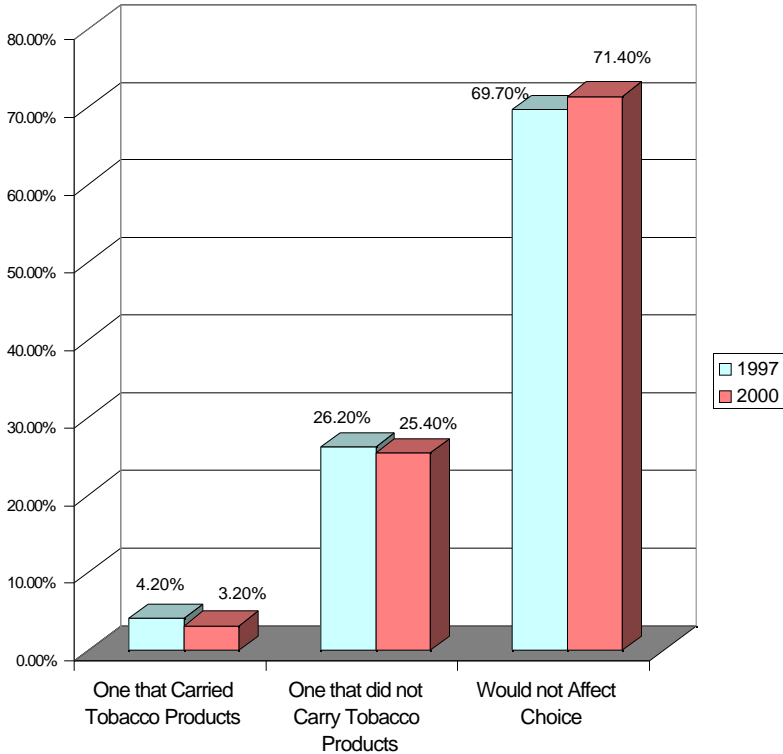
- Almost three of five (59.7%) smokers in 1997 “Disagree” or “Strongly Disagree” with the propriety of tobacco ads and promotions in drugstores. 2000 survey data indicates that *more* than three in five (64.4%) smokers “Disagree or Strongly Disagree” with the practice.

Frequency of Drugstore Patronage

- More than one third of the consumers surveyed in 1997 and 2000 (36.3% and 35.1% respectively) report that they patronize drugstores “Once a Week or More Often.”



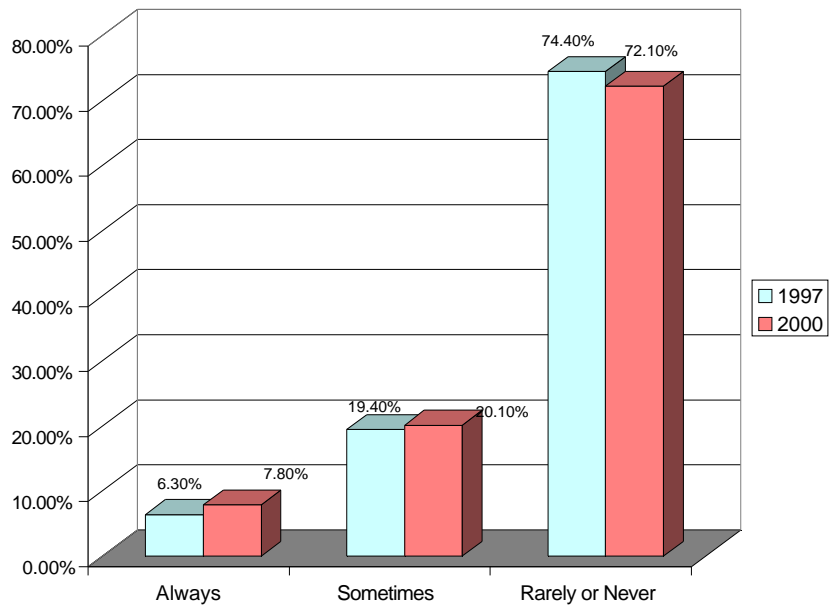
If you had the Choice to Shop at a Drugstore that Carried Tobacco Products or one that did not, Would you...(All Consumers)?



- Over one quarter of consumers from the 1997 (26.2%) and 2000 (25.4%) surveys indicated that they would choose to shop at a drugstore that did not carry tobacco products.
- Just 4.2% of consumers in 1997 and 3.2% in 2000 said that, given a choice, they would prefer to shop at a drugstore that did carry tobacco products.
- The majority of *all* consumers (69.7% in 1997 and 71.4% in 2000) indicated that whether or not a drugstore carried tobacco products would not affect their shopping decision.

How Often do you Buy Tobacco Products at a Drugstore or Pharmacy (Tobacco Users)

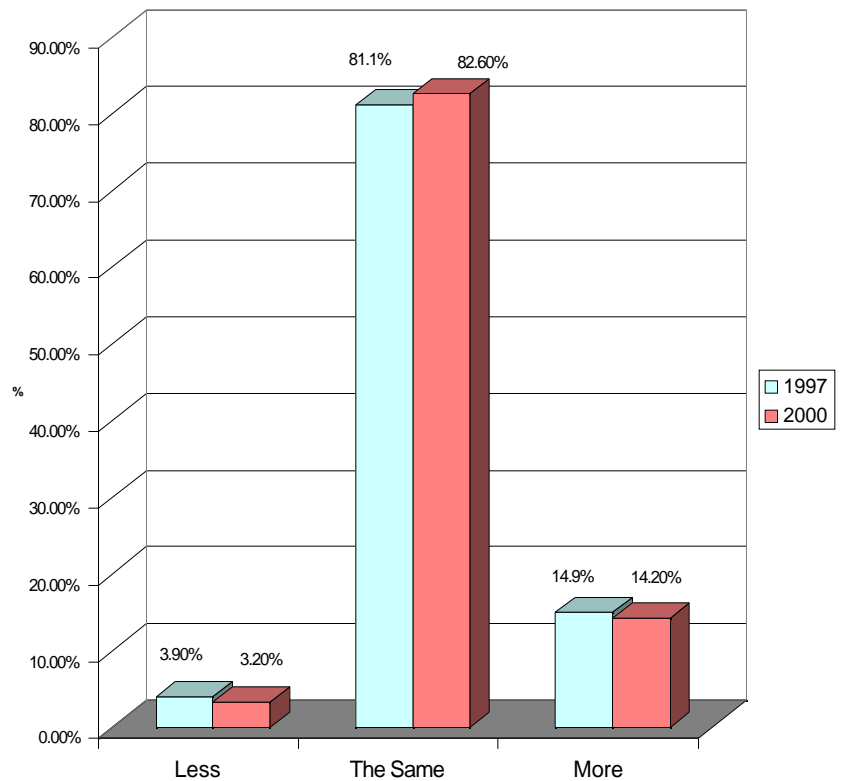
Almost three-quarters of smokers in the 1997 (74.4%) and 2000 (72.1%) surveys “Rarely” or “Never” bought tobacco products at drugstores.



Pharmacies and Drugstores that do not carry tobacco products will **NOT** lose business.

If your Drugstore Stopped Selling Tobacco Products, Would you Shop There More, Less, or the Same?

- 81% of consumers interviewed in 1997 and 83% in 2000 said that if the drugstore they frequent stopped selling tobacco products, they would shop there just as often.
- 14.9% of consumers in 1997 and 14.2% in 2000 reported that they would shop at their drugstore more if tobacco products were no longer sold there.
- Only 3.9% of consumers interviewed in 1997 and 3.2% in 2000 indicated that they would shop at their drugstore less if it stopped selling tobacco products.



The Next Step

Chain drugstores and pharmacies say that they carry tobacco products as a convenience for their customers. Yet, most customers oppose tobacco sales and promotions in drugstores, and most smokers do not purchase their cigarettes at drugstores. In fact, the proportion of smokers opposed to the sale of tobacco in drugstores and pharmacies has increased substantially between 1997 and 2000.

Pharmacies and drugstores, by carrying tobacco products, lend tacit approval to their purchase and use. This sends a deadly message to vulnerable children, who are the primary target of tobacco marketing, as well as to adults.

We hope that the information in these surveys will encourage chain drugstore management to discontinue the sale and promotion of tobacco products, and will encourage consumers to let their local chain drugstore management know how they feel about pharmacies selling tobacco.

Drugstores, which market themselves as health centers, should not be selling or promoting the most lethal drug in America.