Tobacco in the news: An analysis of newspaper coverage of tobacco issues in Australia, 2001

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Funded by VicHealth & the U.S. National Cancer Institute
Methods and Sample

- Content analysis of newspaper articles
- All tobacco focussed articles published in Australian national and capital city newspapers (n = 12)
- Coded for month, state, theme, type of article, prominence, event slant and opinion slant
- 1188 articles in total
Frequency of newspaper articles by month
Percentage of newspaper articles by theme

- Secondhand smoke issues: 20%
- Education & prevention: 15%
- Health effects: 10%
- Tobacco industry: 7%
- Advertising & promotion: 5%
- Economic issues: 5%
- Consumption: 5%
- Product issues: 3%
- Other: 3%

The Cancer Council Victoria
Percentage of articles by event slant

- Positive: 61%
- Negative: 21%
- Mixed: 12%
- Neutral: 6%
Percentage of articles by opinion slant:

- Positive: 60%
- Negative: 22%
- Mixed: 7%
- Neutral: 11%
Rate of articles per newspaper by state

- NT
- ACT
- TAS
- QLD
- WA
- SA
- NSW
- VIC

0 50 100 150 200
Calculating media impressions

• How many people are exposed to newspaper articles about tobacco in each state?

• Number of newspaper articles $\times$ circulation of the newspaper $\times$ 2.2

• To calculate “per capita media impressions” this figure is then divided by the state population
Per capita media impressions by state

- VIC
- NSW
- SA
- WA
- QLD
- TAS
- ACT
- NT

Dimensions: 792.0x612.0
Summary

- 1188 tobacco focussed newspaper articles
- An average of two million media impressions per day
- Coverage generally positive for tobacco control objectives
- Tobacco coverage varied in important ways by month, state, and theme
- The monitoring of newspaper coverage provides a useful index of how tobacco issues are presented in the media