AN EVALUATION OF THE ALASKA BEHAVIORAL RISK FACTOR SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM

http://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Chronic/Pages/default.aspx

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DHHS/CDC Non-Communicable Disease (NCD)-Related Surveillance System Evaluation

- Engage Stakeholders
- Focus the Evaluation Design
- Gather Credible Evidence
- Justify and State Conclusions
Engaging Stakeholders

Key Stakeholder Survey in Nov. 2017
- Sent to 256 individuals in Informed Alaskans and BRFSS Working Group
- 92 respondents
- 5 questions on evaluation priorities

Key Stakeholder Survey:
1. Please tell us how important you think each of the attributes is to focus on in our upcoming Alaska BRFSS evaluation.
Key Stakeholder Survey:
2. Please tell us more about your priorities for an evaluation of BRFSS.

Most common themes from 47 comments:
- Representativeness (12 comments)
  - “From a tribal health perspective, representativeness and solutions to difficulty in obtaining rural samples is probably the biggest priority.”
- Relevance (8 comments)
  - “Should be responsive to current issues”
- Ease of accessing data and survey methodology (6 comments)

Key Stakeholder Survey:
3. What do you think are the strengths of the BRFSS?

Most common themes from 62 comments:
- Trend data (23 comments)
- Representativeness (21 comments)
- Measures relevant topics (20 comments)
- Comparable across states and between population groups in Alaska (14 comments)
- Data quality (12 comments)
- Alaska-specific data (8 comments)
- Data not available elsewhere (8 comments)

“Single most reliable data set for assessing statewide health status”
Key Stakeholder Survey:
4. How do you think the BRFSS could be improved?

Most common themes from 48 comments:
• Increase representativeness of priority populations (9 comments)
• Increase ease of data access (8 comments)
• Include different topics (7 comments)

“I don’t think the data is used as extensively as it could be -- more outreach to make sure Alaskans know about BRFSS and the importance of this kind of data.”

Focus the Evaluation Design

• Data Quality
  • Assessing percentage of missing in AK vs. national BRFSS

• Representativeness
  • Identifying populations adequately described by the AK BRFSS data

• Acceptability
  • Percentage of surveyed respondents who used AK BRFSS data
  • Assessing percentage of refusals in AK vs. national BRFSS
Gather Credible Evidence: Data Quality

Percentage of Missing Responses by Survey Question Order, Alaska compared to US (2016 BRFSS)

Gather Credible Evidence: Data Quality

Percentage of “New” Missing Responses by Survey Question Order, Alaska compared to US (2016 BRFSS)
Gather Credible Evidence:
Representativeness

- Geographic Regions
- Age groups
- Marital status
- Sexual orientation
- Race
- Education
- Employment Status
- Income
- Poverty Threshold
- Poverty Guidelines
- Veteran Status

Stable estimates may also be available for subgroups by other BRFSS questions
Examining Disposition Codes for: Representativeness

Percentage of phone numbers called that resulted in a partial/complete interview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Urban (Anchorage/Mat-Su/Fairbanks regions)</th>
<th>Rural (Northern/Southwestern regions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Landline</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(15% non-working/disconnected)</td>
<td>(58% non-working/disconnected)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cell phone</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(46% non-working/disconnected)</td>
<td>(77% non-working/disconnected)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gather Credible Evidence: Acceptability

2016 Data Users Survey – snowball from CDPHP data users and IBIS and BRFSS working groups
  • 161 complete responses
  • 74% had used Alaska BRFSS data
  • 90% had used Alaska indicator reports, where BRFSS data is available
  • Reported their data needs were met - an average of 4.21 on 1-5 scale (where 5 is that CDPHP met all their data needs last time).
Gather Credible Evidence: Acceptability

Percentage of Refused Responses by Survey Question Order, Alaska Compared to US (2016 BRFSS)

Conclusions

- When compared with U.S. data, Alaska BRFSS data have relatively high data quality and acceptability
- Alaska BRFSS data are representative of many populations, including Alaska Native and rural Alaskan peoples
- Disposition codes reveal that there is a continuing challenge in attaining working numbers, particularly in rural areas and for cell phone numbers
- Qualitative comments to key stakeholder survey suggest the data may be under-used. Gaps in data users knowledge may be an opportunity to provide information.

“If datasets were easier to access to make more specific queries about sub populations, specifically regional, race/ethnicity and low-income.”

“I am interested in being able to do a simple run by region or population group. as long as I can do that I am ok.”
Contact Information

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