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*Form Approved  
OMB No. 0704-0188*

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<b>1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY)</b> 20/08/2018		<b>2. REPORT TYPE</b> poster		<b>3. DATES COVERED (From - To)</b> 08/20-23/2018	
<b>4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE</b> Developing Tobacco Control Control Interventions Across the Lifespan of Military Personnel: Training Phase				<b>5a. CONTRACT NUMBER</b>	
				<b>5b. GRANT NUMBER</b>	
				<b>5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER</b>	
<b>6. AUTHOR(S)</b> Little, Melissa Dr				<b>5d. PROJECT NUMBER</b>	
				<b>5e. TASK NUMBER</b>	
				<b>5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER</b>	
<b>7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)</b> 59th Clinical Research Division 1100 Willford Hall Loop, Bldg 4430 JBSA-Lackland, TX 78236-9908 210-292-7141				<b>8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER</b>  18000	
<b>9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)</b> 59th Clinical Research Division 1100 Willford Hall Loop, Bldg 4430 JBSA-Lackland, TX 78236-9908 210-292-7141				<b>10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)</b>	
				<b>11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)</b>	
<b>12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT</b> Approved for public release. Distribution is unlimited.					
<b>13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES</b> 2018 Military Health System Research Symposium (MHSRS), Kissimmee, FL, August 20-23, 2018					
<b>14. ABSTRACT</b>					
<b>15. SUBJECT TERMS</b>					
<b>16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:</b>			<b>17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT</b>	<b>18. NUMBER OF PAGES</b>	<b>19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON</b>
<b>a. REPORT</b>	<b>b. ABSTRACT</b>	<b>c. THIS PAGE</b>			Clarice Longoria
					<b>19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (Include area code)</b> 210-292-7141

# Developing Tobacco Control Intervention across the Lifespan of Military Personnel: Training Phase



U.S. AIR FORCE

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## BACKGROUND

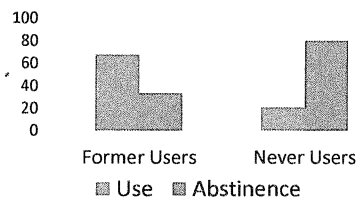
- Military personnel have higher rates of tobacco use compared to civilians
  - Cigarette Rates: 24% vs 18%
  - Smokeless Tobacco Rates: 12.8% vs 2.6%
- The first year of service is particularly high risk for tobacco use
- Throughout the 8 ½ weeks of Basic Military Training (BMT) and the first 4 weeks of Technical Training, Airmen (called Airmen regardless of gender or rank) are required to remain tobacco free.

### Life of an Airman



- 63.0% of Airmen report they are "completely confident" they will remain tobacco-free
- Despite this optimism, many begin using tobacco in their 1<sup>st</sup> year of service

### Tobacco Use Status 1YR After Enlistment



- 76.2% of this initiation/re-initiation is occurring during Technical Training
- Brief health prevention programs may be particularly effective for new recruits in the US military
- **Study Aim:** To develop and test a Brief Tobacco Intervention (BTI) for non-prior service Airmen undergoing Air Force Technical Training

## BRIEF TOBACCO INTERVENTION

- 40-min group-based intervention
- Targets most commonly used tobacco products among Airmen in Technical Training (cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, hookah, e-cigarettes, cigars and little cigars)
- Format is interactive, utilizing the Socratic teaching style and eliciting participation through motivational interviewing (e.g., open-ended questions, reflections)

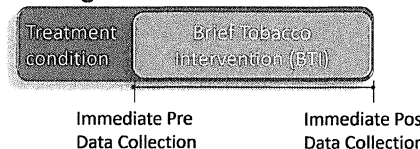
### Components of the Brief Tobacco Intervention

Intervention Target	Strategy	Active Component
Perceived Behavioral Control	Highlight their freedom to choose	- Discussion that tobacco use is legal; tobacco industry manipulation of users is widespread.
Subjective Norms	Correct cognitive misperceptions about TNCP use in the USAF	- Goal of the USAF is to be "tobacco free" - Videos depicting peer groups expressing anti-tobacco sentiment - Airmen report that smoking in uniform looks "unprofessional"
Attitudes towards tobacco use	Decisional Balance	- Airmen led discussion of the positive and negative aspects of using tobacco
Knowledge	Present health consequences of TNCP use	- Short videos from spokespeople that are highly credible to Airmen present the research regarding health effects of hookah and e-cigarettes.
Behavioral economics	Delayed reward discounting	- Elicit Airmen's goals for the next 5 years across career, financial and personal domains. - Assess how tobacco use aligns with goals
Refusal self-efficacy	Modeling	- Discuss with Airmen ways to refuse TNCPs. - Practice refusing tobacco.
Environmental Triggers	Strategize ways to maintain a tobacco free environment	- Discussion of ways to maintain a tobacco free environment. - Places to avoid (e.g., smoke pits, hookah bars).

## STUDY 1

- Participants were 1,055 Airmen undergoing US Air Force Technical Training at Joint Base San Antonio, TX, between Oct 2014 and March 2015
- Intervention was delivered in groups of Airmen during the first week of Technical Training

### Study 1 Design



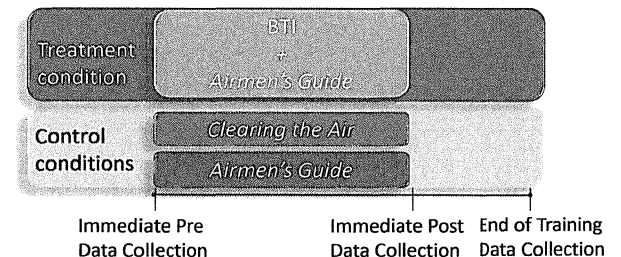
The BTI was effective in significantly increasing perceived harm and decreasing intentions to use tobacco ( $p$ 's < 0.05)

Effects were seen for targeted and non-targeted products, indicating that BTI is effective for all tobacco

## STUDY 2

- Participants were 2,999 Airmen undergoing US Air Force Technical Training at Joint Base San Antonio, TX, between April 2017 and Jan 2018
- Groups of Airmen were randomized to 1 of 3 conditions:
  - (1) BTI + military tailored smoking cessation pamphlet (*Airman's Guide to Remaining Tobacco Free*)
  - (2) *Airman's Guide to Remaining Tobacco Free*
  - (3) Standard smoking cessation pamphlet, the National Cancer Institute's *Clearing the Air*
- Intervention was delivered to groups of Airmen during their first week of Technical Training
- This study is ongoing and results will be available in the Fall of 2018.

### Study 2 Design



## CONCLUSIONS

- Given that over 220,000 new recruits enter the military annually in one of the service branches, the public health implications of an effective brief tobacco intervention targeting the most commonly used tobacco products for military personnel in Technical Training is considerable.
- If the BTI is proven efficacious it can be easily disseminated to other service branches that have similar tobacco bans during Technical Training.

**DISCLAIMER:** The views expressed are those of the authors and do not reflect the official views or policy of the Department of Defense or its Components. The voluntary, fully informed consent of the subjects used in this research was obtained as required by 32 CFR 219 and DODI 3216.02\_AFI 40-402.

**FUNDING:** This study was funded by 4 grants (DA042083, DA036510, DA036510-S1 and DA037273) from the National Institute of Drug Abuse (R. Klesges, Principal Investigator). This study was a collaborative endeavor between the US Air Force, the University of Tennessee Health Science Center and the Rectors and Visitors of the University of Virginia via Cooperative Research and Development Agreements (11-119-WHMC-CRADA01, 17-250-59MDW-C17005 and 17-361-59MDW-C18003).

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