

# How Do Quitline Callers Compare with the New Zealand Smoker Population?

## Fact Sheet He Pūrongo Meka

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Quitline is a major smoking cessation provider in New Zealand. In 2006, 32,555 callers registered, consisting of 19,149 (59%) new callers, 8,485 (26%) relapsed callers and 4,921 (15%) Quit Pack callers. It is important to find out if particular smokers are more attracted to using the Quitline service. This fact sheet compares the demographic and geographical characteristics of Quitline callers registered in 2006 with the adult smoker population in New Zealand, identified by the 2006 Census of Population and Dwellings (Census). In the Census, smoking status was collected from all adults aged 15 years or over.<sup>1</sup> Current smokers were defined as those who smoked tailor-made or roll-your-own cigarettes regularly, i.e. one or more a day. People who smoked pipes, cigars or cigarillos were not counted.

### Ethnicity

Ethnicity is self-identified in both data sources, and multiple responses are allowed – a person can identify themselves with more than one ethnic group. In July 2006, Quitline modified the way ethnicity was collected and recorded to align with the standards recommended by Statistics New Zealand.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, the ethnicity comparison here only includes Quitline callers registered between July and December 2006. Quitline callers who did not disclose their ethnicity or who were unidentified are excluded (n=330).

- The ethnicity distribution of the adult smoker population is largely similar to that of Quitline callers, with Europeans being the majority.
- The proportion of Māori adult smokers and Quitline callers is the same, at 24%.
- Pacific and Asian callers are slightly under-represented compared with the smoker population.

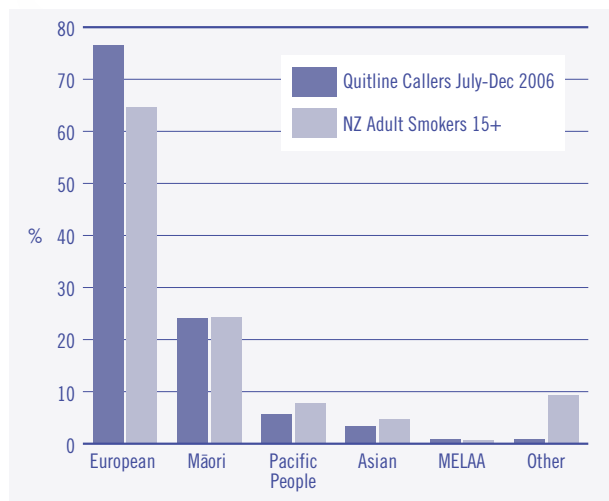
<sup>1</sup> Quitline data includes callers under 15 years old, but it only comprises 0.8% of all clients.

<sup>2</sup> Statistics New Zealand (2005). *Statistical Standard of Ethnicity 2005*. Wellington: Statistics New Zealand.

Quit Me Mutu

- The different proportion of callers and smokers who identified themselves as being of “Other” ethnicity may be the result of differences in categorisation and ways data was collected (i.e. paper and pen were used for most Census forms, while Quitline callers gave data over the phone).

**Figure 1. Ethnicity distribution of Quitline callers and adult smokers**



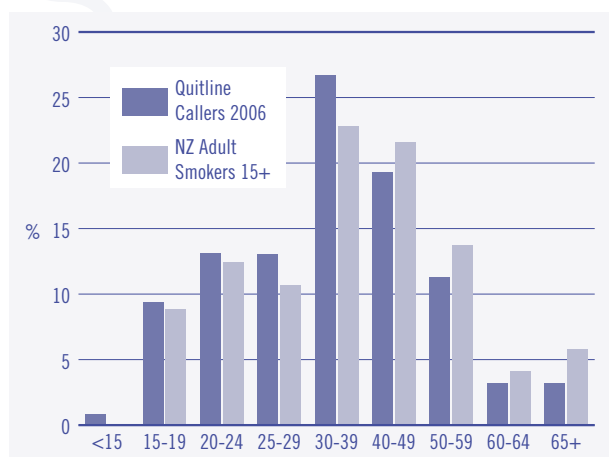
- MELAA = Middle Eastern/Latin American/African.

## Age

In the Census only people aged 15+ were asked about their smoking status. Hence, the percentage of people under 15 years old who smoke is not known from this data source. Quitline callers who did not disclose their age or who were unidentified (n=1,106) are excluded.

- The age of Quitline callers and adult smokers are both normally distributed, with almost 50% of people 30–49 years old.
- The proportion of people under 40 years old is over-represented in the Quitline caller population.

**Figure 2. Age distribution of Quitline callers and adult smokers**

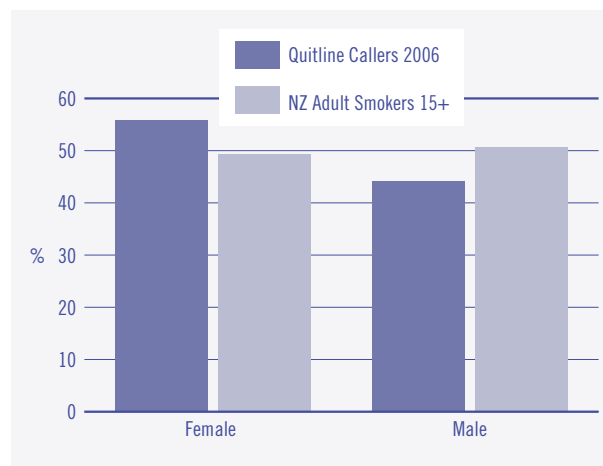


## Gender

Quitline callers who did not disclose their gender or who were unidentified (n=783) are excluded.

- There are more female than male callers registered with Quitline.
- The proportion of male and female adult smokers in the New Zealand population is almost identical.

**Figure 3. Gender distribution of Quitline callers and adult smokers**



## District Health Board (DHB) of Residence

The residence of Quitline callers and the adult smoker population is identified by their local DHB. Quitline callers who did not disclose an address or for whom no DHB could be identified (n=1,222) are excluded. Figure 4 gives a general picture of the geographical distribution of regular smokers and Quitline callers. Figure 5 shows the service usage by regular smokers across DHBs in 2006, calculated by dividing the number of Quitline callers by the number of regular smokers in each DHB.

- The geographical distribution of Quitline callers largely reflects that of the smoker population. Those DHBs that have a larger proportion of adult smokers also have a larger proportion of Quitline callers such as Canterbury, Counties Manukau and Waitematā DHBs.
- The percentage of adult smokers registered with Quitline in each DHB ranged from 4.0 to 6.3%.
- Quitline callers were under-represented in some DHBs, notably Tairāwhiti, Southland, South Canterbury, Wairarapa and Counties Manukau.
- Quitline callers were over-represented in some DHBs such as Capital and Coast, Hawke’s Bay and Otago.

Figure 4. Residence (DHB) of Quitline callers and adult smokers

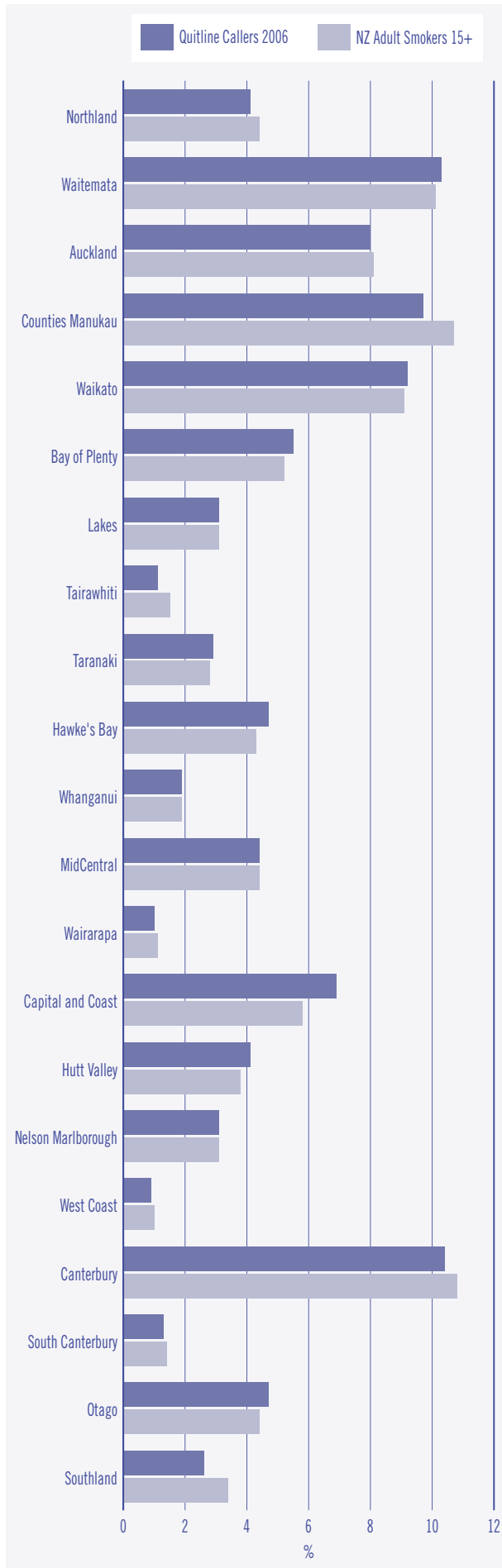
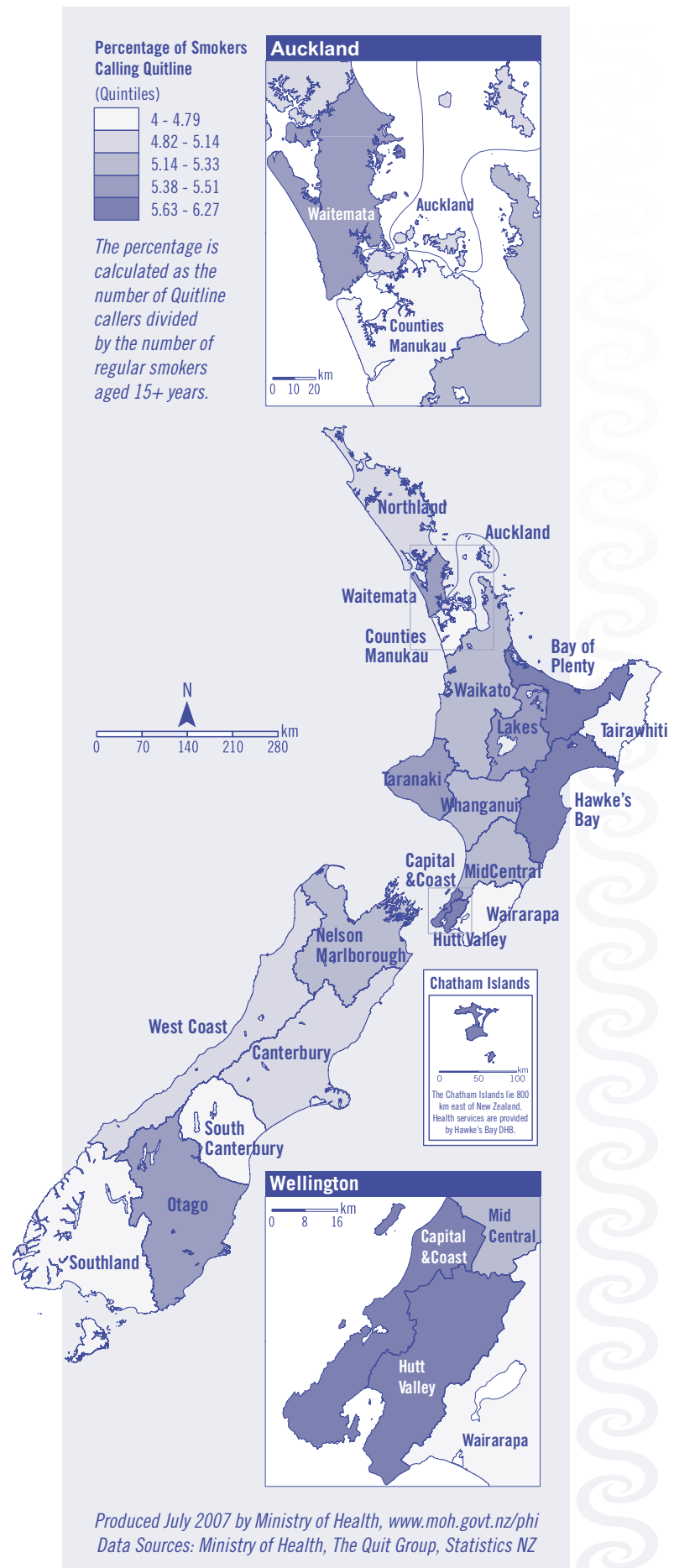


Figure 5. Percentage of smokers calling Quitline by DHB, 2006



## Appendix

**Table A1. Ethnicity distribution of Quitline callers and overall smoker population**

Ethnicity	Quitline callers (%)	NZ adult smokers 15+ (%)
European	76.5	64.6
Māori	24.2	24.3
Pacific	5.6	7.8
Asian	3.3	4.8
MELAA	0.8	0.6
Other	0.9	9.3

- MELAA = Middle Eastern/Latin American/African.
- Quitline callers who did not disclose their ethnicity or who were unidentified are excluded (n=330).

**Table A2. Age distribution of Quitline callers and overall smoker population**

Age	Quitline callers (%)	NZ adult smokers 15+ (%)
<15	0.8	-
15–19	9.4	8.8
20–24	13.1	12.4
25–29	13.0	10.7
30–39	26.7	22.8
40–49	19.3	21.6
50–59	11.3	13.7
60–64	3.2	4.1
65+	3.2	5.8

- Quitline callers who did not disclose their age or who were unidentified are excluded (n=1,106).

**Table A3. Gender distribution of Quitline callers and overall smoker population**

Gender	Quitline callers (%)	NZ adult smokers 15+ (%)
Female	55.9	49.4
Male	44.1	50.6

- Quitline callers who did not disclose their gender or who were unidentified are excluded (n=783).

**Table A4. DHB of Quitline callers and overall smoker population**

DHB	Quitline callers (%)	NZ adult smokers 15+ (%)
Northland	4.1	4.4
Waitematā	10.3	10.1
Auckland	8.0	8.1
Counties Manukau	9.7	10.7
Waikato	9.2	9.1
Bay of Plenty	5.5	5.2
Lakes	3.1	3.1
Tairāwhiti	1.1	1.5
Taranaki	2.9	2.8
Hawke's Bay	4.7	4.3
Whanganui	1.9	1.9
MidCentral	4.4	4.4
Wairarapa	1.0	1.1
Capital and Coast	6.9	5.8

DHB	Quitline callers (%)	NZ adult smokers 15+ (%)
Hutt Valley	4.1	3.8
Nelson Marlborough	3.1	3.1
West Coast	0.9	1.0
Canterbury	10.4	10.8
South Canterbury	1.3	1.4
Otago	4.7	4.4
Southland	2.6	3.4

- Quitline callers who did not disclose their address or who were unidentified are excluded (n=1,222).

**Table A5. Percentage of smokers calling Quitline in 2006 by DHB**

DHB	Regular smokers aged 15+ who called Quitline (%)
Northland	5.0
Waitematā	5.4
Auckland	5.1
Counties Manukau	4.8
Waikato	5.3
Bay of Plenty	5.6
Lakes	5.4
Tairāwhiti	4.0
Taranaki	5.4
Hawke's Bay	5.7
Whanganui	5.1
MidCentral	5.3
Wairarapa	4.7
Capital and Coast	6.3
Hutt Valley	5.8
Nelson Marlborough	5.2
West Coast	4.8
Canterbury	5.0
South Canterbury	4.6
Otago	5.5
Southland	4.4

- Quitline callers who did not disclose their address or who were unidentified are excluded (n=1,222).