

S9 – Promotion and Brief Intervention of Smoking Cessation at the Smoking Hotspots

Administering Institution: The University of Hong Kong

Co-organisation: Hong Kong Council on Smoking and Health

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Project Start Date and End Date: July 2014 to March 2016

Purposes/Objectives: To promote smoking cessation at smoking “hotspots” - the outdoor areas with a large number of smokers who gather to smoke and with rubbish bins for cigarette butt disposal. These hotspots are usually located at bus stops, entrances of commercial buildings and shopping malls.

Activities/Programmes: We selected 14 outdoor locations for the observation and intervention. Two half-day training sessions were organized to equip 40 university student ambassadors with knowledge of tobacco control and smoking cessation, and techniques to approach smokers at the hotspots. These ambassadors proactively delivered brief intervention, including souvenirs, measurement of exhaled carbon monoxide level, brief advice and invitation for telephone follow-up.

Targets/Recipients: Smokers

Expected and Actual Participation:

Expected participation:

1. Train 10 students to be outreach ambassadors
2. Approach 1,700 smokers, and distribute souvenir to 1,000 smokers at the 15 smoking hotspots
3. Provide AWARD (Ask, Warn, Advise, Refer, and Do-it-again) brief advice to 850 smokers, in which 425 (50%) of them receive the complete advice
4. Further contact 85 smokers (around 10% of the smokers who receive brief intervention) through telephone within 7 days, and follow-up at 1, 3 and 6 months after recruitment

Actual participation:

1. From January to August 2015, 3,096 smokers were approached and 1,285 of them (41.5%) accepted our souvenirs at the 14 selected smoking hotspots.
2. Brief smoking cessation advice was delivered to 916 smokers, in which 430 (46.9%) received the complete AWARD advice (about 1 minute) and 486 (53.1%) received the incomplete advice.
3. 210 smokers consented to further telephone follow-up, and 60.0% of them (n=126) were successfully contacted at 1-week follow-up.
4. About one-fourth of the contacted smokers (24.5%) were aged 15-29, and the proportion was higher than that of the general smoking population (11.5%).
5. In the smokers who were successfully contacted at 6-month follow-up (n=109), 16 (14.7%) reported smoking abstinence in past 7 days.
6. In all the smokers who received any intervention (N=1,285), the self-reported 7-day abstinence rate was 1.2%.
7. The average cost for a smoker to receive the brief advice and quit smoking was about HK\$234 (US\$30) and HK\$13,478 (US\$1,728), respectively.

Benefits Derived: This project has promoted smoking cessation to 1,285 smokers through souvenirs, face-to-face brief advice or telephone follow-ups. We successfully obtained the consent from 210 smokers to receive further cessation support. Without pharmacotherapy, about 16 smokers had quit at 6-month follow-up. Such methods have been adopted by other organizations to promote smoking cessation and recruit smokers for quitting programmes successfully.

Conclusion: Promoting smoking cessation and recruiting smokers for smoking cessation services at smoking hotspots are feasible with satisfactory outcomes at low cost, particularly for young smokers.

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