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Engaging both healthcare workers & smokers in smoking cessation program - A pilot anti-smoking campaign in Kwai Tsing District GOPCs

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Introduction

According to the government Thematic Household Survey conducted in 2015, the smokers' awareness and utilization of local smoking cessation services were low as 59.1% and 5.1% respectively. Current evidence shows that clinicians' advice, especially from multidiscipline, can significantly increase the smoking cessation rate. An anti-smoking campaign – "Let's talk about smoking" was initiated to promote attendance of Smoking Counselling and Cessation Program (SCCP).

Objectives

- To engage frontline healthcare workers in providing smoking cessation services
- To raise smokers' awareness of SCCP and their motivation to quit

Methodology

The campaign was run in 5 GOPCs in Kwai Tsing district from 1 August to 20 August 2016. Campaign activities included update smoking status for all patients, distribute smoking cessation card to all smokers, regular display of smoking cessation electronic-poster & video in waiting hall.

Specific strategies had also been adopted in individual clinics, in the following 3 ways, based on the resources available in local setting:

Group 1- "Interview Group", smokers were actively approached by clinic staff to assess their intention to quit, with brief smoking cessation advice.

Group 2-"Lung Age Group", nurses performed the same as group 1 plus offered lung age measurement with office spirometer.

Group 3-"CO Group", nurses performed the same as group 1 plus offered carbon monoxide (CO) level checking by CO monitor.

Results were illustrated immediately with the use of lung age graph or Smokerlyzer CO chart accordingly. Referral to SCCP for follow up was arranged if the smokers agreed.

Result

153 smokers were recruited (male 129, female 24; age range 29-86, mean age +/- SD 57.4+/-13.2 years), with 37 smokers in "Interview Group", 58 in "Lung Age Group" and 58 in "CO Group".

29 smokers (19.0%) agreed SCCP referral ("Interview Group" 13.8%, "Lung Age Group" 41.4%, "CO Group" 44.8%). The subsequent SCCP attendance rate was 58.6%. The 3-month abstinence rate was 11.8%.

It is important to increase both the smokers' and healthcare workers' awareness towards smoking cessation. To cultivate a sustainable friendly anti-smoking atmosphere, GOPCs can consider to run similar campaign regularly to maintain the momentum. As most smokers require multiple quit attempts before succeed, healthcare workers can consider the use of lung age or CO measurement to enhance their motivation, as the results can be easily visualized and understood, which might be useful to trigger the change of their smoking behavior.

As this was the first pilot run in our cluster, further study is needed to quantify the effectiveness of these interventions on smoking cessation.