ABSTRACT BOOK

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TOBACCO PREVENTION AND CESSATION

Aim & Scope

Tobacco Prevention & Cessation, (Abbr: Tob. Prev. Cessation; ISSN: 2459-3087) is an open access, peer-reviewed online journal that encompasses all aspects of tobacco use, prevention and cessation. The aim of the journal is to foster, promote and disseminate research involving tobacco use, prevention, policy implementation at a regional, national or international level and finally the treatment of tobacco attributable disease through smoking cessation. Indexed in PubMed, Scopus and the Web of Science Emerging Sources Citation Index (Impact factor 1.8).

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Tobacco industry and e-cigarettes

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We have at this moment the harm reduction concept running in the medical world, promoted by the tobacco industry in many ways. One of the promoted products are e-cigarettes. E-cigarettes are now competing with pharmacological products as a quitting smoking product. The modalities to promote are the same as for the conventional tobacco used 40-50 years ago. The tobacco industry has changed its strategies and tried to convince us of the intense concern in protecting consumers. Even if they adopt the same manner of promotion as for conventional cigarettes the interferences are multiple: research, publication of articles, using doctors, incentives, politicians, and health care VIP. We are discussing in our presentation some of these problems induced by splitting the medical and researchers world in two. We are describing the modalities of changing the attitude of smokers, politicians, doctors, and professional societies. At the same time, we assist a boom of consumers recruited from teenagers and if we are looking at the results of the studies the benefits of e-cigarettes in quitting smoking are controversial. We are discussing at the same time also the new evidence about the consequences of e-cigarettes on different organs like the respiratory and cardiovascular systems. Our presentations demonstrate once again the interferences of the tobacco industry in our lives and try to underline also the implications of this strategy in the long term starting with commercial aspects, lobbying for alternative products, and splitting of the medical world.

Conflicts of interest

The author has no conflicts of interest to declare.

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A newborn in tobacco control: OXY Belgium

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In March 2024, OXY Belgium was officially established. The mission of OXY Belgium is aligned with the field of public health, specifically targeting cardiovascular diseases, respiratory diseases, cancer, and other health conditions. The association's primary objective is to challenge existing societal norms and enhance public health literacy to reduce the normalization of nicotine and tobacco product use, except for medical purposes. This mission is guided by the World Health Organization (WHO) recommendations, the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC), and best practices from the most advanced countries in this domain. In practice, OXY Belgium prioritizes protecting young individuals from consuming tobacco and non-medical nicotine-based products in all forms, as well as from nicotine dependence. OXY Belgium also wants to fight against the environmental impact of tobacco and non-medical nicotine-based products through all production chains and their waste, including cigarette butts, filters, plastics, liquids, batteries, etc. Finally, the association encourages consumers of tobacco and all types of non-medical nicotine-based products to stop their use. How? The association aims to achieve its objectives primarily mainly through the provision of expertise and opinions, dissemination of information to the general public and decision-makers, organization of events, and participation in national and international programs. In accordance with Article 5.3 of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC), the association is independent of the tobacco industry and the industry of non-medical nicotine-based products. It is not influenced by their commercial and other interests.

Conflicts of interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

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What's the problem with nicotine pouches?

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Nicotine pouches (white snuff) have become a major problem in Sweden, as a lot of teenagers have become addicted to nicotine within a short time. The tobacco industry claims the pouches are tobacco-free and therefore harmless, and that they are made to help smokers quit smoking, and therefore good for public health. But both claims are false. In this presentation, I'll show how the ads for nicotine pouches are directed toward teenagers, primarily girls. I also show how the annual measurement of young people's use of tobacco products makes clear that the use of nicotine pouches has exploded in the last couple of years. We can also see how teenagers' first contact with tobacco is through the nicotine pouches, and some users thereafter begin to smoke cigarettes or vape, but hardly anyone quits smoking to begin using nicotine pouches. Smokers who try to switch to snuff or nicotine pouches are more likely to become dual users. Thus, instead of helping people quit, these products are designed to facilitate nicotine addiction and encourage traditional smoking. Finally, I'll show how new research proves nicotine pouches are worse for your health than traditional snuff, probably because of the higher concentration of nicotine. Swedish Match, as well as other producers of nicotine pouches, are now striving to make their products sell in the rest of Europe. The conclusion is that it's necessary for the EU to implement the same ban on nicotine pouches as it has on traditional snuff if we don't want a new generation growing up in Europe becoming addicted to nicotine.

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Are smoking effects on health the same for all smokers?

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Background

Smoking is one of the major public health concerns in Serbia, a country with a high smoking prevalence rate. Previous studies have shown that the impact of smoking on health can vary based on multiple factors related to smokers' characteristics.

Objectives

In this study, we aimed to investigate possible health disparities

within the smoking population, accounting for their smoking habits, chronic conditions, and sociodemographic factors. In addition, we intended to examine the effect of smoking intensity while controlling for other factors.

Methods

The survey was conducted using the CAWI method on a quota-representative sample of the Serbian general population aged between 18 and 60 (N = 1,005). The questionnaire comprised items related to sociodemographic and smoking variables and several variables related to health, including weight and height, alcohol consumption, and a large set of health issues and chronic condition indicators.

Results

For this purpose, we analyzed only the subsample of smokers (N = 387; 50.4% females). At the baseline level of analysis, the results revealed that females and people with any chronic condition tend to have higher levels of health issues. Further on, we analyzed the effects of smoking intensity on health, controlling for sex, age, region and type of residence, body mass index, alcohol consumption frequency, chronic conditions, and exposure to tobacco and HTP smoke. The results indicated a higher level of health issues in individuals smoking over one pack per day compared to those who smoke less than one pack, although the effect size was small (partial n2 = 0.025). There was no significant interaction between sex, the presence of chronic conditions, and smoking frequency.

Conclusions

It can be concluded that females, people with any chronic condition, and heavy smokers face a greater risk of worsened health resulting from tobacco use.

Conflicts of interest

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Impacts of tobacco tax increases on tax revenues and public health in Serbia: A simulation model

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Background

Despite many efforts to reduce smoking, Serbia remains one of the leading countries in smoking prevalence, with around 38% of adult smokers.

Objectives

We aimed to examine how the increase in tobacco excise taxes may influence tobacco consumption, and related outcomes – government revenues, premature deaths, and smoking initiation.

Methods

In this study, we used various data sources, including the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, the Ministry of Finance, and the Tobacco Administration. To apply a simulation model, we considered 2023 as the baseline year and forecasted the changes for the subsequent two years. Our simulation model was based on the assumption of a 15% annual increase in specific excise taxes.

Results

The assumed increase in specific excise leads to a retail price increase of 10.2% in 2024 and 11.3% in 2025. The estimation showed that tobacco consumption is expected to decrease by 4.7% in 2024 and 5.3% in 2025, resulting in a total prevalence of 35.5% in 2025. As the government revenues include all taxes, we estimated that the total revenue would increase by 6.6% in 2024 and 6.6% in 2025. However, we observed a progressive pattern regarding the number of avoided premature deaths among smokers; the results showed that 320 and 678 people could avoid death in the subsequent two years in case a hypothesized tax increase is applied. In addition, this change could deter over 17,000 youth (aged up to 24) from smoking initiation.

Conclusion

Overall, our study provides clear evidence that increasing specific excise taxes by at least 15% can have multiple positive effects. These findings can also be seen as a policy recommendation – Serbia needs to increase tobacco taxes to reduce smoking effectively.

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Shall we play a game of smoking cessation? Adapting the pick klop game to Turkish

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Background

New technological developments have facilitated the development of innovative methods to eradicate nicotine addiction. One of these methods is gamification. Gamification is defined as the use of game design in conjunction with learning activities and non-game situations. The Pick Klop game is a board game that contains gamification concepts that were developed in order to reduce/end smoking behavior.

Objective

The purpose of this study is to determine the validity of the Pick Klop game within a Turkish context and adapt it to Turkish society.

Materials and Methods

This study used a 5-stage methodological approach that included an initial translation, an evaluation of this translation, a back translation, an evaluation of the back translation, and an expert's opinion. For the content validity step, the Scope Validity Rate (SVR) and Scope Validity Index (SVI) were calculated. Due to the lack of a scale study, reliability studies could not be conducted. The content validity and expert opinions of the PickKlop game were completed by nine (9) experts, five breast physicians, a public health nurse, a child health and illness nurse, a French language and literature specialist, and an education science specialist.

Results

The Scope Validity Rate (SVR) of the 357 playing cards was evaluated by nine experts, charged with ensuring the validity of the study was 0.77, and the Scope Validity Index (SVI) value was 0.99.

Conclusion

Teaching environments require changes due to innovative approaches and developing technology. One of the necessary changes is smoking cessation education. We believe that

educational environments blended with game and gamification approaches will increase learning activities by participating and creating a fun environment.

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Changes in the tobacco use and other substances of young students in Albania during the COVID-19 pandemic

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Introduction

The use of tobacco, alcohol, and other substances among the young population is a phenomenon that has increased steadily in the last decades. The use of these products has several short- and long-term implications for the health of users. The COVID-19 pandemic has had significant consequences for the use of tobacco and other substances especially among youngsters. This study aimed to assess the changes in tobacco and other substance use during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Methods

This is a cross-sectional study conducted from April to June 2022 among Vlora University students, in Albania. Based on the needs of the current work, parts of the C19 ISWS Questionnaire were translated, adapted, and used. Data were collected online through Google Forms. Dissemination of the questionnaire was conducted through institutional student emails as well as on different social media platforms. Data analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics 21.

Results

In total 210 students took part in the study with 53.3% of them being females and a mean age of 23.98 (SD=2.873). Among the participants, 33.3% were smokers, 7.1% were ex-smokers and the rest of them (59.5%) did not smoke. There were some changes in tobacco consumption before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. In comparison before and during the pandemic, there was an increase of 5.2% in those who didn't smoke and a slight increase (1.9%) in those who smoked daily. Additionally, there is a decrease of 4.3% and 2.9% of those who smoke once per week and more than once per week respectively. Similar differences have been observed also in the number of smoked cigarettes. The consumption of other substances (like marijuana) has decreased during the pandemic). Key factors for changing their behavior towards tobacco consumption were fear of getting infected with COVID-19, health concerns, cost of the product, quarantine/social distance, etc.

Conclusions

This study shows that the number of nonsmokers decreased during the pandemic period. Healthcare systems need to exploit this situation to provide regular health advice and assistance for remaining quit.

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The prevalence of hookah smokers among children and adolescents aged 12 – 16 in Belarus

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The purpose of this survey was to assess the prevalence of hookah use among children and adolescents aged 12 – 16 in Belarus. This survey involved a total of 3,485 people, including 1,737 girls and 1,726 boys, and included six questions from the main questionnaire of the GYTS aimed at hookah consumption. The statistical analysis was performed using the SUDAAN software package; a 95% confidence interval was calculated to determine weighted prevalence estimates and standard errors. According to the GYTS survey conducted in the Republic of Belarus in 2021, hookah smoking is becoming increasingly popular. The number of adolescents who have ever smoked hookah is 9.3%. The prevalence of regular hookah smokers is quite low (0.9%). However, there are justified fears that teens who have never smoked cigarettes but have tried hookah are more likely to start smoking cigarettes and become regular cigarette smokers within two years. The frequency of hookah use naturally increases with age. The number of adolescents who have ever smoked hookah in groups of 14, 15, and 16 years of age, and among students in 9th, and 10th grades is 2.6 times more than among students aged 13 years and the 7th grade, respectively (10.7%, 11.7% and 18.2% of adolescents, respectively, vs. 5.5% of 12-year-olds, with $p < 0.001$; 13.0% and 14.2% of students in the 9th and 10th grades respectively, vs. 5.1% of students in the 7th grade, $p<0.001$). This national survey provides the first data on the prevalence of hookah smoking among children and adolescents in Belarus and allows us to conclude that the growing popularity of waterpipe tobacco smoking dictates the need for timely recommendations on waterpipe smoking policy.

Conflicts of interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

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#SponsoredByBigTobacco: How the tobacco industry and big tech are addicting youth

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Background

In an increasingly digital world, the world's largest multinational tobacco companies have turned to under-regulated social media platforms to advertise tobacco and nicotine products to an unlimited audience of young social media users. With the click of a button, tobacco giants can now reach users around the world in an instant and expose billions of young people to advertisements

for their addictive products.

Objectives

The Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids examined how Philip Morris International and British American Tobacco are using social media to aggressively advertise e-cigarettes, heated cigarettes, and nicotine pouches to young people. The project exposes the true audience for Big Tobacco's online marketing and underscores the urgent need for increased regulation and safeguards both online and offline in tobacco control.

Methods

Using social listening software, the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids analyzed the content, scope, and reach of social media marketing for three brands: Vuse (British American Tobacco), Velo (British American Tobacco), and IQOS (Philip Morris International).

Results

More than 40 percent of the audience that is being targeted by tobacco companies on social media is young people under the age of 25. Content promoting tobacco and nicotine products has been viewed billions of times around the world on social media platforms – primarily on Instagram.

Conclusions

Urgent action is needed by governments to implement strong policies that protect young people from the predatory marketing tactics of Big Tobacco companies online.

Conflicts of interest

The author has no conflicts of interest to declare.

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Age control – the fundament for introducing a smoke-free generation

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Background

Most European countries have prohibited the sale of tobacco products to persons younger than 18 years while the legal age required to purchase tobacco in the US is 21. Latvia will increase its minimum age to purchase tobacco to 20 in 2025; Ireland will raise the minimum age to 21 in 2028, and the UK plans to ban tobacco sales for anyone born after 2009. In Denmark, there have been discussions of a similar ban.

Objectives

To enforce the age limit of 18 years, the Danish parliament passed legislation allowing the Danish Safety Technology Authority the opportunity from July 1, 2024, to use underage mystery shoppers to control the sales of alcohol, tobacco, and nicotine products in supermarkets and the convenience sector.

Methods

Young people, aged 15-17 years, were hired to buy alcohol, tobacco, and nicotine products under the supervision of an employee from the Danish Safety Technology Authority, who had authorization to give fines from 25.000 Danish kroner – 3333 € – for selling tobacco to minors.

Result

During the first month of the new control, 195 out of the 600 checked shops didn't ask for ID. In contrast, before the use of young mystery shoppers, only 12 tobacco outlets were caught selling tobacco or nicotine products to underage customers in four years. Still, we haven't seen any change in attitude from the retailers. Most supermarkets continue to sell alcohol and tobacco as they did, and some argue that the new control is exaggerated.

Conclusions

Preliminary results from the first months of control with mystery shoppers in Denmark show that only about one-third of tobacco outlets ask for ID when servicing young underage customers. Implementation of the age limit of 18 years is necessary for raising the legal age or achieving a smoke-free generation.

Conflicts of interest

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Perinatal smoking and sleep disorders in neonatal age: A systematic review

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Introduction

Perinatal smoking, encompassing both prenatal and postnatal exposure, has been linked to various adverse health outcomes in neonates. Among these, sleep disorders represent a significant yet underexplored area of concern. Adequate sleep is vital for neonatal development, and sleep disruptions can lead to long-term health issues.

Objective

This study aims to identify the association between smoking and sleep disorders in neonates.

Materials and Methods

A literature review was conducted by searching scientific articles in electronic databases using keywords such as "smoking," "perinatal period," "sleeping disorders," "secondhand smoke exposure," and "thirdhand smoke exposure," among others.

Results

Nicotine, a psychoactive component of tobacco, is associated with sleep disorders in neonates due to its impact on brain function and sleep-promoting neurons when exposed prenatally. The quality of neonatal sleep is further affected by secondary and tertiary exposure to tobacco smoke, leading to various sleep disturbances such as respiratory irregularities, obstructive sleep apnea syndrome, delayed sleep onset and maintenance, nocturnal awakenings, irritability and crying, arousal disorders, sleep transition and wakefulness issues, excessive sleepiness, and night sweats. Neonates who breastfeed from mothers who have recently smoked experience shorter sleep durations compared to those breastfed by mothers who have refrained from smoking for several hours. Consequently, the higher the nicotine dose the neonate receives through breastfeeding (which depends on how close to the feeding the mother has smoked), the shorter the

neonate's sleep duration.

Conclusions

The findings of the studies highlight the long-term and potentially serious clinical impacts on neonatal sleep due to perinatal exposure to maternal smoking. The development of educational programs to inform about the potential effects of smoking on neonatal sleep, along with support for mothers to quit smoking, will enhance health outcomes and protect neonates from future potential complications.

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Environmental exposure to tobacco smoke and the onset of respiratory infections in neonatal, infant, and childhood stages: A systematic review

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Introduction

Smoking during the perinatal period disrupts the structure and development of children's lungs, leading to alterations, reduced pulmonary function, respiratory infections, and frequent hospitalizations, particularly in children whose parents are smokers.

Objective

This study aims to examine the impact of environmental exposure to tobacco smoke and the manifestation of respiratory infections in neonates, infants, and children.

Materials and Methods

A literature review was conducted by searching scientific articles in electronic databases using keywords such as "smoking," "perinatal period," "respiratory," "secondhand smoke exposure," and "thirdhand smoke exposure," among others.

Results

Parental tobacco use, both prenatally and postnatally, along with secondary and tertiary exposure of children to tobacco smoke, is associated with adverse respiratory outcomes, including wheezing and asthma; bronchitis; bronchiolitis; persistent cough (lasting more than 3 weeks); otitis media and bronchopulmonary dysplasia. Due to respiratory infections, hospitalization of children in Neonatal Intensive Care Units (NICU), Pediatric Intensive Care Units (PICU), or Pediatric High Dependency Units (PHDU), respiratory support, and lifelong medication are often unavoidable. Prenatal maternal smoking significantly increases the risk of these diseases, while postnatal exposure exacerbates this risk. Extended breastfeeding appears to be a protective factor against these diseases, as many mothers tend to quit smoking during lactation.

Conclusions

Respiratory health during the neonatal, infant, and childhood stages is severely impacted by the harmful effects of environmental exposure to tobacco smoke. Parental education and support for smoking cessation are essential to safeguard their children's health. The role of healthcare providers is crucial and of utmost importance.

Conflicts of interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

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Implementing traceability of tobacco products: Challenges and lessons learned

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The Public Health Agency of Sweden has since 2018 implemented the regulations on traceability of tobacco products which are set out in the WHO FCTC, the Protocol, EU regulations, and national law. Since 2018 there have been many challenges for the Agency. This presentation will explain some of the challenges for example; access to the traceability system for national authorities, the role of different authorities, financing for supervision/enforcement, resources, and qualifications. The presentation will also explain the lessons learned and some conclusions by the Agency related to the challenges.

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The author has no conflicts of interest to declare.

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Smoking and post-COVID-19 syndrome: An overview

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Introduction

Long COVID is a recently described entity that is responsible for significant morbidity and that has consequences ranging from mild to life-threatening. Smoking has been reported as a risk factor for poor outcomes of acute SARS-COV-2 infection and seems to also play a role in promoting post-COVID-19 symptoms.

Aim

To review the interaction between smoking and long-term COVID-19 in order to characterize smoking's role as a risk factor and possibly identify new research directions.

Methods

The PubMed/MEDLINE database was searched using the keywords 'smoking', 'long COVID', and 'post-acute COVID' to identify relevant English-language articles published up to December 2023.

Results and Conclusions

From the 392 initial hits, a total of 37 papers were deemed relevant. There was significant variability concerning how tobacco usage

was quantified and reported; still, there is compelling evidence linking smoking to an increased risk of developing various clinical manifestations of post-acute-COVID disorder. Some clinical conditions, such as dyspnea, cardiovascular symptoms, and cognitive or mental health impairment, seemed to be relatively strongly associated with tobacco use in COVID-19 patients. Data available firmly support recommending smoking cessation as a clinically valuable tool for avoiding long COVID-19 syndrome development.

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The Swiss wolf is still in sheep's clothing: The tobacco industry use of philanthropy in Switzerland

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Background

Switzerland is a country in which the tobacco industry (TI) has great influence (ranked 89 out of 90 on the Tobacco Industry Interference Index). A mechanism of this influence is the TI's sponsorship of cultural events and donations to charities as a means of inserting itself in the local social fabric, building a network of allies, and projecting the image of a good corporate citizen.

Objectives

This presentation, based on TI's internal documents, aims to show that TI's "philanthropic" programs are driven exclusively by its political and economic objectives, contradicting its attempts to present itself as a disinterested citizen.

Methods

We examined TI's official communication and compared it with its internal declarations. In Switzerland, the main players contributing to these cultural and social programs are Philip Morris International (based in Lausanne) and Japan Tobacco International (headquartered in Geneva). We put their actions in perspective by assessing them in the light of scientific data on the use of corporate social responsibility (CSR) by TI.

Results

In Switzerland, TI gives money to a range of actors, including political parties, cultural institutions, humanitarian organizations, LGBTIQ+ associations, and biodiversity promoters.

Documents show that TI targets specifically the organizations and places where it wants to raise its influence and gain access to political elites. TI gives money without demanding anything in return from the recipients of its "generosity": this creates the strongest binding effect.

Conclusions

Switzerland is lagging when it comes to structural measures to combat TI's influence. The CCLAT recommends banning TI's sponsorship and other CSR activities (Art. 13) and keeping TI's interests out of public policy (Art. 5.3). In Switzerland, current and forthcoming regulations give the tobacco industry too much influence and freedom, perpetuating the devastating consequences of the smoking epidemic.

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Smoke and mirrors: Raising awareness on tobacco industry interference

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Background

The active phase of policymaking to strengthen tobacco legislation in the EU has been marked by a surge in tobacco industry lobbying, which has led to delays in releasing and adopting new legislation.

Objectives

This panel aims to investigate the size and scope of tobacco industry interference at the EU level during 2019-2022. Monitoring and analyzing industry interference allows us to raise awareness about industry lobbying among EU and national decision-makers through publications in traditional and social media. Using Art. 5.3 FCTC and the EU Transparency Register to restart the revision of the EU Tobacco Tax, Products, and Advertising Directives should be prioritized by tobacco control advocacy groups.

Methods

Since 2015 the SFP systematically tracks meetings between tobacco industry representatives and EU policymakers in the Commission and Parliament using the EU Transparency Register, which includes publicly available information reported by registered entities. While it has its limitations (i.e., MEPs not declaring some of the meetings held with the industry, and a lack of accountability), the Register offers data on the funds spent by the industry on lobbying, the number of lobbyists and consultancies employed, and the number of meetings. The SFP's systematic approach results in a comprehensive understanding of the size of the tobacco industry interference in Europe.

Results

Between 2019 and 2022 (the latest available year in the EU Transparency Register), the industry spent nearly €60 million on lobbying activities at the EU level. This resulted in 100 meetings during 2019 – 2024 between tobacco industry representatives and 39 MEPs, 29 of whom have been re-elected in 2024.

Conclusions

By uncovering the "smoke and mirrors" of the tobacco industry, this discussion seeks to unpack best practices for monitoring and exposing the tobacco industry's interference in the policy-making process to restart the revisions of key EU tobacco control directives.

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Development of an AI behavior change app

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Smoking cessation services are an established part of the UK health system, funded by national and local governments. Services

are commissioned by Local Authorities (Local Government) according to local needs and are provided by organizations that are paid to deliver services, usually based on achieving a number of 4-week quits per year. Everyone Health is one such commissioned service, delivering Stop Smoking Services across England in 6 Local Authorities, and delivering thousands of 4-week quits per year.

To maximize quit rates, Everyone Health has worked with Emeritus Professor Robert West of UCL and British Websites to develop an Artificial Intelligence-driven app to provide treats and advice to those being supported through our services to make and maintain a quit attempt. This oral presentation will describe the process of developing and initial piloting of the app and the plans for evaluation following the rollout.

Conflicts of interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

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Effectiveness of varenicline versus nicotine replacement therapy in smoking cessation: A systematic review

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Background

Smoking cessation is crucial to reduce the health risks associated with tobacco use. Varenicline and Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) are commonly used pharmacotherapies, each with distinct mechanisms of action. This systematic review compares the effectiveness of Varenicline versus NRT in achieving long-term smoking cessation.

Methods

A comprehensive literature search was conducted across PubMed, Cochrane Library, Scopus, and Web of Science, covering studies from 2014 to 2024. The review included randomized controlled trials (RCTs) and cohort studies comparing Varenicline with NRT in adult smokers. The quality of studies was assessed using the Cochrane risk of bias tool and the Newcastle-Ottawa Scale (NOS).

Results

Ten studies were included, comprising nine RCTs and one cohort study. The pooled analysis revealed that Varenicline was significantly more effective than NRT in promoting smoking cessation, with a pooled risk ratio of 2.09 (95% CI: 1.52, 2.67). This superiority was consistent across various populations, including younger and older smokers and those with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). The effectiveness of Varenicline was observed in achieving continuous abstinence at various intervals, including six months, 12 weeks, and 24 weeks. The combination of Varenicline with NRT also showed a synergistic effect, resulting in even higher cessation rates compared to either therapy alone. Additionally, the analysis indicated moderate heterogeneity among the studies, potentially attributable to differences in study design, population characteristics, and intervention protocols.

Conclusions

Varenicline is a more effective option than NRT for smoking cessation, particularly when combined with NRT. Healthcare providers should consider these findings in treatment planning, especially in populations that may benefit most from Varenicline's efficacy. Further research is recommended to optimize treatment protocols and address accessibility issues.

Conflict of interest

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Secondhand smoke exposure in public outdoor spaces in The Netherlands: The stronger the smell, the more exposure to nicotine

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Background

While secondhand smoke exposure in outdoor spaces has been investigated before, few studies have used airborne nicotine data to quantify it. Such data could help policymakers and tobacco control advocates gain public en political support for smoke-free outdoor public spaces.

Objectives

To quantify levels of nicotine exposure by non-smokers in public outdoor settings (café terraces, public transport stops, and building entrances) in The Netherlands.

Methods

Between May and November 2021, we visited 24 outdoor locations in The Netherlands. We measured levels of airborne nicotine when smokers were present and when they were not. We rated the tobacco smell intensity during each measurement and counted the number of smokers. Airborne nicotine data were collected through active sampling on thermal desorption tubes. The tube contents were later analyzed using gas chromatography-mass spectrometry. Using linear mixed models, we investigated the association between levels of airborne nicotine and 1) the number of smokers and 2) tobacco smell intensity.

Results

Nicotine levels were higher when smokers were present (B = 1.40, 95% CI [0.69, 2.11], $p < .001$). For each additional smoker present, we measured higher average nicotine levels (B = 0.23, 95% CI [0.10, 0.37], $p = .001$). We measured higher airborne nicotine levels when the smell of tobacco smoke was stronger (B = 0.85, 95% CI [0.44, 1.26], $p < .001$).

Conclusions

Non-smokers are exposed to higher levels of nicotine in outdoor public spaces if the smell of tobacco smoke is stronger. They are also exposed to higher nicotine levels when more smokers are present. Overall, this study showed that airborne nicotine is useful in quantifying levels of secondhand smoke in various outdoor locations.

Conflicts of interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

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Endobronchial tuberculosis: Unraveling diagnostic challenges

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Background
Endobronchial Tuberculosis (EBTB) is a challenging form of tuberculosis that affects the tracheobronchial tree and frequently mimics neoplastic conditions due to its nonspecific clinical, radiological, and bronchoscopic presentations.
Case presentation
We present the case of an 83-year-old female with a history of smoking who developed progressive respiratory symptoms. Initial imaging revealed a right upper lobe lesion, raising concerns of malignancy. Despite no prior history of tuberculosis, the clinical and radiological findings were strongly suggestive of cancer. Fiberoptic bronchoscopy revealed nodular lesions within the trachea and a necrotic obstructing mass in the right upper lobe bronchus. Histopathological examination of biopsy samples showed granulomatous inflammation with multinucleated giant cells and caseating necrosis. Cultures from bronchial aspirates confirmed the presence of Mycobacterium tuberculosis. The patient responded well to antituberculous therapy, significantly improving clinical symptoms and radiological findings.
Discussion
This case highlights the diagnostic challenges EBTB posed, particularly its ability to masquerade as a malignancy. EBTB can present with highly variable radiological patterns, complicating diagnosis. Bronchoscopy is pivotal in identifying lesions, while histopathological examination is essential for confirming tuberculosis in suspected cases. In patients, particularly those with risk factors like smoking, a high index of suspicion is necessary to avoid delays in diagnosis and treatment.
Conclusion
EBTB should be considered in the differential diagnosis of tracheobronchial lesions, especially in smokers and those with radiological findings suggestive of cancer. Early diagnosis through a multidisciplinary approach—incorporating bronchoscopy, imaging, microbiology, and histopathology—is essential for initiating timely antituberculous therapy, preventing complications, and improving patient outcomes. This case underscores the importance of thorough diagnostic evaluations in complex cases of respiratory disease.
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Oral health risks of cigarette use

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Background
It is known that tobacco is related to a broad spectrum of oral conditions and diseases, from benign to malignant. Health Professionals, becoming aware of the oral health consequences, should be able to successfully impart their knowledge to patients, in the context of personalized counseling to enhance their motivation for smoking cessation.
Objectives
The presentation aims to provide a concise overview of the effects of smoking on oral health for all health professionals.
Methods
For this purpose, data from PubMed, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, World Dental Federation, Tobacco Induced Diseases, The American Academy of Oral Medicine, and Wiley Online Library were used. The search was done within three months and in the English language, with criteria of the keywords: tobacco use, dental implants, caries, periodontal disease, oral cancer, oral diseases, and nicotine. From the available bibliography, we selected 20 articles, but we only used 15.
Results
Smoking may influence oral microbial composition, cause epigenetic alteration of oral epithelial cells, and inhibit local immune response, damaging oral tissue. The damages of soft and hard tissues can be divided into a) benign lesions such as the higher DMFT score, 80% higher risk of periodontitis and dental implants, doubled possibility of smokers being edentulous, and b) precancerous and cancerous soft tissue lesions, such as leukoplakia, which may progress to oral cancer, the 8th more common type of cancer. Smokers have a 4.65-fold increased risk of developing oral cancer. Smoking also has a negative impact on the treatment of the diseases mentioned above.
Conclusions
Awareness of health providers is important to aid their patients to quit tobacco use. In particular, the role of the dental community is very important since half of the patients who smoke visit the dentist each year, making the dental clinic an ideal place for smoking cessation interventions.
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The UK Tobacco Industry Interference Index 2023: Lessons, challenges and ways forward

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The UK Tobacco Industry Interference Index (UKTI) forms part of the Global Tobacco Industry Interference Index (GTI). Based on a survey methodology developed by the Southeast Asia Tobacco Control Alliance (SEATCA) and published by the Global Center for Good Governance in Tobacco Control (GGTC), the GTI is a

global survey on how governments respond to tobacco industry interference and to what extent they protect their public health policies from the commercial and vested interests of the tobacco industry, as required under the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC). Since the first GTI in 2019, the UKTI has been carried out by the Tobacco Control Research Group (TCRG) at the University of Bath. The latest UKTI was published in November 2023. Monitoring, investigating, and reporting on industry interference is complex, with large volumes of publicly available information in multiple locations and formats. These include government sources such as lobbying registers, Hansard reports, and registers of interests; tobacco industry sources such as company reports, websites, and press releases; and external media including the industry and retail press. TCRG has implemented innovative methods using a wide range of tools and resources, including open-source intelligence techniques (OSINT) and freedom of information requests (FOIs). These methods are outlined and critically assessed. In doing so, we hope that lessons learned in the UK may be relevant to monitoring the tobacco industry interference elsewhere.

Conflicts of interest

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Understanding smokers' compliance with smoke-free outdoor environments: A realist review

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Background

More and more local governments implement smoke-free outdoor environments in an effort to decrease adolescent smoking and denormalize smoking behavior. Unfortunately, compliance of smokers with such environments is often lacking. To better understand smoker's compliance, we reviewed the international literature.

Methods

We performed a realist review. This exploratory approach synthesizes existing evidence into a program theory that links smokers' compliance with outdoor smoke-free environments with specific mechanisms and outcomes. The search was conducted in PubMed, Web of Science, Embase, and PsycINFO for all published articles until September 2023. Twenty-five peer-reviewed English-language articles were included, describing both quantitative and qualitative studies. From these articles, evidence was extracted about contexts and mechanisms that influence the compliance of smokers.

Results

The program theory showed that smokers' compliance with smoke-free outdoor environments increases if they accept the policy, have sufficient knowledge of the policy, and when the policy affects their motivation to quit smoking. However, these mechanisms may be hindered by the feelings of smokers as they might find it hard to make a successful quit attempt, are addicted to smoking, see smoking as a legit coping mechanism, use smoking to deal with stressful situations, have limited confidence in the effectiveness and associated enforcement, feel resistance towards the policy, and don't understand the policy. The context in which these environments are implemented, such as communication about the environment, the associated stop-smoking facilities, and the size of the environment, influences mechanisms and the desired compliance.

Conclusions

Compliance of smokers with smoke-free outdoor environments can be influenced by their acceptance and knowledge of the policy, as well as their motivation to quit. When creating smoke-free public outdoor spaces., these mechanisms are important to consider so that policymakers are better prepared for smokers' reactions. This will benefit compliance with smoke-free outdoor areas.

Conflicts of interest

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Visualizing traceability data of tobacco products

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The EU traceability system for tobacco products generates data useful in a wide range of analyses. The Public Health Agency of Sweden is the only Swedish authority that has access to the EU traceability database. We are exploring ways to visualize this data alongside other databases, such as income levels, population demographics, and public health statistics, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of tobacco consumption patterns. The traceability system provides that all unit packets of tobacco products are to be marked with a unique identifier to record their movements in the European Union. Each unit packet of tobacco products shall be recorded and traced to a specific retail outlet, enabling detailed mapping of tobacco sales and consumption patterns across cities and municipalities. By combining and visualizing this data with other datasets, we aim to show that traceability data can potentially be used for public health initiatives. The primary objective of the traceability system is to combat illicit trade in tobacco products. The presentation will show how traceability data can indicate illegal sales activities and guide enforcement authorities against illicit trade. In this presentation, we will show how different national authorities can use traceability data for different purposes such as health, illicit trade, taxes, environment, etc.

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Reaching the unreachable: A health equity door-step approach to reducing tobacco use among the indigenous tribal population of South India

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Introduction
India has the world's second-largest tribal population after African countries. It is home to approximately half of the world's autochthonous people, making it home to many tribes with interesting and varied origins, customs, and social practices. The current study was conducted to assess tobacco use, prevalence of oral cancer, and awareness among Malayali tribes in Yelagiri Hills, Tamil Nadu, India.
Methods
In 2010, a cross-section survey among 660 was conducted in the 14 tribal villages of Yelagiri Hills who had completed 18 years of age, had lived in the area for more than 15 years, were present on the day of the examination, and were willing to participate. A pre-tested questionnaire was used to collect data on demographics and tobacco habits. A single examiner performed an intra-oral examination to determine the Oral Health Status using the WHO Oral Health Surveys - Basic Methods Proforma (1997). The statistical analysis using SPSS version 19 demonstrated a significant prevalence of potential oral malignant lesions and a high rate of tobacco use. The population was followed up at regular intervals for the next eight years and, in 2018, was analyzed for tobacco use and oral cancer awareness.
Results
In 2010, 57.7% of the 660 study population had no formal education. 75% of the study population drank alcohol on a regular basis. Among those who used tobacco, 26% smoked beedi, 10.9% smoked cigarettes, 65% chewed raw tobacco, 18% chewed Hans, and 28% used both smoking and smokeless form of tobacco. In 2018, there was a significant decrease in tobacco use (37%), increased awareness of the health risks of tobacco use among adolescents, and decreased potentially malignant oral lesions and oral cancer prevalence among the population.
Conclusions
Continuous follow-up and awareness creation of the tobacco hazard can help to reduce the menace of tobacco in this population.
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Social media monitoring as a tool for advocacy: Analyzing advertisements for Heated Tobacco Products (HTPs) and e-cigarettes in Germany

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Introduction
In Germany, tobacco products and e-cigarettes are prohibited from being advertised on TV, radio, print, and the Internet. Despite this, advertisements for these products can still be found on social media platforms.
Objectives
This study aims to monitor advertising for e-cigarettes and heated tobacco products (HTPs) on social media and analyze the portrayed advertisements to advocate for better enforcement of the legislation.
Methods
The study used the online media monitoring tool Meltwater to extract posts from June to September related to Heated Tobacco Products (HTPs) and from May to June for e-cigarettes on Instagram, Facebook, Pinterest, and TikTok. Search criteria were established, results were restricted to the German language, and posts were categorized according to their origin, subject, and message.
Results
We identified 762 relevant posts related to e-cigarettes on Instagram (92% of posts), Pinterest (19%), Facebook (6%), and TikTok (1%). The majority of the posts (580) came from commercial accounts and 72 posts from influencers. Regarding HTPs, we found 265 relevant on Instagram (56% of posts), Facebook (31%), Pinterest (12%), and TikTok (1%). Most of the advertising came from commercial accounts (251 posts), with six posts originating from influencers. The advertising emphasized themes like lifestyle and individuality.
The results of the study were used for advocacy for tobacco control on World No Tobacco Day, for a national campaign on advertising bans, and were sent to political decision-makers to improve the enforcement of the legislation.
Conclusions
Despite the ban on advertising for HTPs and e-cigarettes, social media platforms still display posts encouraging the use of these products and showing commercial offers. The study results are a valuable tool for advocacy for tobacco control.
Conflicts of interest
The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.
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Squeezing tobacco outlet density, a trend analysis 2002-2019

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Introduction
There is limited research on how government regulation affects tobacco outlet density over time.
Objectives
To examine the association between government-imposed tobacco control laws and outlet density between 2002 – 2019.
Methods
Records of all outlets were obtained from the government-mandated tobacco sellers licensing scheme in one state of Australia, Tasmania (population ~500,000). Trends in density, i.e., retailers per 1000 people, between 2002 and 2019, were analyzed as an

annual percentage change (ACP) and by identifying inflection points using standard Joinpoint regression analysis. Trends by retailer type were analyzed from 2010 to 2019.

Results

The highest retailer density was observed in 2002 (3.17 retailers per 1000 people) and the lowest in 2019 (1.20 retailers per 1000 people). Over the study period, we observed a mean APC of -5.1% of retailer density (CI -5.9% to -4.3%, p>0.001). A dramatic decrease in APC 7.9 % density per year (CI 9.7% to 6% p<0.01) was observed between 2009 and 2013, corresponding to changes in tobacco packaging laws and import taxes. An APC decrease of 8.9 % density per year (CI -10.7% to -7.1% p<0.001) between 2016-2019, which corresponded with a tripling in government licensing fees. Cafes, takeaways, and restaurants were most affected, with their retailer density reducing by -19.8 % per year (CI -23.7% to -14.4%, p< 0.001). No change was observed for supermarkets and tobacconists from 2010 to 2019, with APCs of -0.6% (CI -1.2% to -0.1%, p =0.020) and -3.1% (CI-4.1% to -2.1% p<0.001) respectively.

Conclusions

Tobacco import tax, a ban on advertising, packaging laws, and license fee increases were associated with reduced tobacco outlet density. Supermarkets and tobacconists – large-volume sellers - were impervious to these levers and may require direct regulation. Whether the changes in tobacco retail outlet density are associated with reduced smoking rates is being investigated.

Conflicts of interest

V. Martin-Gall is a part-time Senior Advisor Tobacco and a part-time PhD student. Government-collected tobacco retail licensing revenue may fund the position.

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Investigating the effectiveness of a locus of control-based smoking reduction program designed for secondary school students

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This quasi-experimental study used a pre-test-post-test control group to assess the effectiveness of a locus of control-based smoking prevention program designed for secondary school students. The study included 204 children, 103 in the intervention group and 101 in the control group, who were in fifth grade at two secondary schools in İzmir, Turkey. The control group in the study received standard education and training, whereas the intervention group received a locus of control-based smoking prevention program for 14 weeks. The Data Collection Form, the Nowicki-Strickland Internal-External Locus of Control Scale, the Problem-Solving Inventory for Children, the Middle School Self-Efficacy Scale, and the Decision Balance Scale were used to collect research data in the third, sixth, and twelfth months following the training. The data was evaluated using multi-way and one-way analysis of variance for repeated measures, Bonferroni corrected t-test, ANCOVA and effect size, and the chi-square test for power analysis. The relationship between the training program and the study's other sub-dimensions was explained using structural equation modeling. It has been determined that the developed model effectively alters cigarette trial scenarios. The intervention and control groups differed significantly in their impression of smoking advantages (p<0.05), but there was no significant difference in time or group*time interaction (p>0.05). There was a change in perception of smoking hazards over time (p<0.05), but no significant difference was detected in terms of group or group*time interaction (p>0.05). The mean self-efficacy scores differed by group and time (p<0.05), but there was no significant difference in group*time interaction (p>0.05). The intervention and control groups showed significant differences in mean scores for locus of control and problem-solving skills across time, group, and group*time interactions (p<0.05). There was no difference between the smoking trial statuses. The intervention program was shown to have a minor effect size and borderline power for smoking. As a result, it was determined that the locus of control-based smoking prevention program had little influence on improving children's locus of control, self-efficacy, problem-solving scale mean scores, and perceptions of smoking harms while decreasing perceptions of smoking advantages. Additionally, it was revealed that the intervention approach was ineffective in stopping children from smoking.

Conflicts of interest

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Monitoring of tobacco products and flavor accessories in outlets in The Netherlands

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Introduction

In the past few years, the government of The Netherlands has introduced measures to reduce the number of tobacco outlets. In 2022, tobacco vending machines were banned, and in 2023, online sales were banned. In July 2024, the government recently banned the sale of tobacco products from supermarkets. Together with these measures, the government substantially increased excise duties on tobacco products in 2023 and 2024.

Objectives

With this annual study, we investigate which tobacco products and flavor accessories outlets offer, and identify trends in this offer. This allows us to monitor changes in the tobacco retail market and the introduction of new tobacco or nicotine products.

Methods

In October 2022 and October 2023, we collected data in eight randomly selected municipalities in The Netherlands. We visited 63 and 69 tobacco outlets (i.e., supermarkets, petrol stations, newsagents, and specialist stores). We asked which tobacco products, nicotine products, and flavor accessories they offered.

Results

Our results showed that tobacco products, nicotine products, and flavor accessories are widely available in retail outlets in The

Netherlands. For example, heated tobacco products were offered in almost two-thirds of the outlets, even though these products are not frequently used in The Netherlands. Nicotine products (e.g., e-cigarettes) and flavor accessories were mostly offered in newsagents and specialist stores.

Conclusions

The Dutch government will continue to introduce measures to discourage smoking. This periodic survey will examine subsequent changes in the availability of national tobacco products in the coming years.

Conflicts of interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

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Smoking and vaping: The behavior of Flemish youth and young adults scrutinized

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Introduction

Research indicates that vaping is becoming increasingly popular among Flemish youth. However, there is a lack of recent and detailed data on both vaping and smoking behaviors, as well as the relationship between the two among young people.

Objectives

The study aims to assess the knowledge, awareness, concerns, understanding, intentions, and behaviors related to smoking and vaping among individuals aged 12 to 26. Additionally, it seeks to clarify the correlation between smoking and vaping within this age group.

Methods

A quantitative survey was conducted via an online questionnaire. One of the researchers recruited participants aged 12 to 15 through Smartschool ads and school visits, and participants aged 16 to 26 were recruited via online panels.

Results

The findings reveal a clear link between vaping and smoking. Over half (52%) of young people who vape also smoke traditional tobacco products, such as cigarettes. This is a substantial proportion, considering that 13% of young people are current vapers. Furthermore, 76% of smokers also engage in vaping. The study underscores the significant influence of parental smoking and vaping; children of parents who smoke or vape are far more likely to adopt these behaviors themselves.

Conclusions

This study contradicts the notion that e-cigarettes help deter young people from smoking traditional cigarettes. There is a strong connection between smoking and vaping, particularly among the youngest group (12 to 15-year-olds), where the barrier to starting vaping is much lower than for smoking.

Conflicts of interest

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Improving self-care routines of people with diabetes, including tobacco cessation, through collaborative effort and practice suggestions

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Introduction

Cigarette smoking raises the chance of developing type 2 diabetes. People with diabetes who smoke are more prone than non-smokers to struggle with insulin doses and controlling their illness. Type 2 diabetes self-care practices, such as maintaining healthy behavior and reducing risk factors, help to reduce side effects and boost quality of life.

Objectives

The cross-sectional study aims to address additional diabetes-related self-care activities among type 2 diabetes patients with at least one other chronic illness, such as smoking habits and collaborative aspects of tobacco cessation among patients and healthcare providers.

Methods

The study comprised 400 participants aged 40 to 65 in primary care settings in Albania. The data was collected using the Summary of Diabetes Self-Care Activities Measures with Additional Activities version. The questionnaire was self-administered and anonymous.

Results

43.3% of participants reported that no one asked about smoking during their most recent doctor's visit. Among the 255 smoker patients in the study, 26.8% said that no one advised them to stop cigarette smoking or offered to refer them to a smoking cessation program during their most recent doctor appointment. The study demonstrated a significant correlation ($p<0.05$) between diabetes patients' socio-demographic variables and smoking behavior. Among smoking patients, 4.3 claimed that their last cigarette was a week ago.

Conclusions

To prevent chronic side effects and complications, patients with diabetes must work collaboratively with healthcare providers to improve their self-care routines. Tobacco cessation and smoking-related risks should be included in the standard health education procedures of primary healthcare providers.

Conflicts of interest

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A bundle of initiatives toward tobacco-free internal environment

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Background

The rising prevalence of tobacco use poses significant health risks, not only to users but also to non-smokers exposed to secondhand smoke. In response to this public health crisis, a comprehensive bundle of initiatives comprising a series of health promotion activities has been developed to promote a tobacco-

free environment in the Northern Borders region K.S.A. These initiatives aim to raise awareness, provide treatment options, and establish a structured approach to tobacco control.

The objectives of this study include establishing the first Kingdom-wide Tobacco Control Center, to create a centralized authority for coordinating tobacco control efforts and policies. Additionally, the study aims to implement the "5 Minutes are Enough" Initiative, which seeks to educate individuals on the harmful effects of tobacco and encourage cessation within a short timeframe. Another key initiative it to launch the "Attractive but Killer", designed to raise awareness about Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) and their health implications. Furthermore, the study proposes the development of the Prisoners Awareness Raising & Treatment Initiative, which aims to provide tobacco cessation support and education to incarcerated individuals. The "High Cost Initiative" will inform and educate both military and civilian personnel about the economic burdens associated with tobacco use. To engage younger audiences, the study introduces the "Doom Experience Initiative," which involves secondary and intermediate students in understanding the dangers of tobacco use through experiential learning. It also emphasizes the establishment of a continuous Physicians Training Initiative to equip healthcare providers with the necessary knowledge and tools to support tobacco cessation efforts. Moreover, the study encourages incentivizing and enhancing all tobacco control team members in the region to TTS certification, including the public health administration director. A competition initiative will focus on raising awareness and building capacity among primary healthcare physicians. The study also highlights the importance of World No Tobacco Day (WNTD) campaigns and campaigns utilizing social media platforms such as YouTube and WhatsApp, which will enhance community volunteer participation. Additionally, it suggests using poetry as a tool for tobacco cessation by creating songs for children and encouraging regional poets to write popular poems that highlight the health and social risks of tobacco use. Finally, the study acknowledges the obstacles to achieving a better quality of life and proposes a program to honor and celebrate individuals who have successfully quit smoking.

Methods

Workshops, training sessions, and lectures were conducted for healthcare professionals, educators, and community leaders, as well as students at different educational levels, with appropriately tailored messages and topics to effectively disseminate information and strategies. Awareness campaigns utilized social media, posters, and community events to reach a broad audience, particularly targeting youth and workplaces. Support programs were established to create cessation support groups and resources in both prisons and workplaces. Additionally, educational materials, such as brochures, videos, and online content focusing on the risks of tobacco use and the benefits of quitting, were developed and distributed. Direct communication strategies were also employed.

Results

Since 2013, there has been a continuous decrease in the prevalence of tobacco use in the Northern Borders, accompanied by increased awareness about the health risks associated with tobacco consumption among targeted populations. This heightened awareness has led to greater engagement in cessation programs, particularly among young individuals and employees across various sectors. The establishment of the Tobacco Control Center has further advanced these efforts by coordinating tobacco control activities and monitoring progress. Participants in training sessions have provided positive feedback, indicating an enhancement in their knowledge and preparedness to address tobacco use within their communities.

Conclusions

The bundle of initiatives towards a tobacco-free internal environment represents a multifaceted approach to combat tobacco use. By addressing various demographics and utilizing diverse methods, these initiatives have the potential to significantly reduce tobacco prevalence and its associated health risks. Continued evaluation and adaptation of these programs will be essential to ensure their effectiveness and sustainability in promoting a healthier, tobacco-free kingdom.

The effectiveness of the evaluation process is demonstrated through several key metrics. Awareness and knowledge metrics assess cessation rates and include follow-up surveys to measure reductions in consumption, utilizing a 7-day point prevalence along with follow-ups at 3, 6, and 12 months to evaluate long-term cessation success. Behavioral metrics are also analyzed to understand changes in participants' habits. Engagement and participation metrics are tracked by monitoring attendance and program enrollment numbers, while institutional metrics provide insight into the overall performance and impact of the programs implemented.

Conflicts of interest

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Predicting absolute risk of lung cancer risk using clinical risk factors and polygenic risk scores

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Lung cancer is the third most common cancer and the biggest cancer killer globally. In 2021, 1% of all deaths were due to lung cancer, and because an estimated 80% of lung cancer deaths are due to preventable risk factors, there is enormous potential for risk models that identify high-risk individuals to be implemented to drive down the unnecessary burden of this disease. Several risk factors affect an individual's risk of developing lung cancer, including tobacco use, pollution, radiation, family history, and genetics. Whilst tobacco use has the single most significant effect on an individual's chance of getting lung cancer, even within current and previous users, there exists a significant variation in risk. Therefore, models that can identify smokers who are at even greater risk of lung cancer due to combinations of additional risk factors are needed to help national health systems target interventions and surveillance on those who are most likely to get a disease. Here, we present a risk model for lung cancer risk prediction that incorporates age, sex, BMI, smoking history, alcohol consumption, history of lung disease, family history, and genetic risk through a polygenic risk score (PRS) for lung cancer. We develop a new PRS for lung cancer with an Odds Ratio per Standard Deviation change in PRS value of 1.33 (95%CI 1.3-1.37) following adjustment for all relevant risk factors. Adding PRS

to an integrated lung cancer risk prediction model that includes clinical risk factors yields a better calibrated and more accurate overall model than a clinical model without PRS. The new PRS-integrated model can be used to significantly stratify a 5-year and lifetime risk of lung cancer in both former and current smokers. For example, current smokers with high PRS values have 3-4 times the risk of those with the lowest genetic risk values. Our model can also classify 5-year risk in former smokers and stratify these individuals above and below a 2% 5-year high-risk threshold. Our results pave the way for absolute risk prediction models that incorporate genetic risk to be used to identify individuals at risk of lung cancer and target interventions toward them.

Conflicts of interest

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Attitudes and perceptions survey regarding tobacco smoking and risk of seasonal flu, SARS-COV-2 infection, and community-acquired pneumonia (CAP) among healthcare workers (HCWs)

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Introduction

HCWs have adopted certain attitudes and behaviors regarding smoking behavior and risk perception of respiratory diseases.

Methods

An online anonymous survey was conducted between 01/12/2022 and 01/12/2023 based on a questionnaire. Demographic characteristics, tobacco smoking history, and immunization, including their attitude and risk towards influenza, COVID-19 disease, and CAP, were studied.

Results

Four hundred seventy-five participants, 265 current smokers/210 ex-smokers, mean age of 43.5 ± 13.8 years, 284 worked in general hospitals, 171 in health care centers, and 20 in one-day clinics. Smokers presented 35±4 pack/yrs and Fagerström score (6±2), while ex-smokers presented 28±9 pack/yrs and Fagerström score (3±3). Active smokers reported a flu vaccine (2022-2023 period) rate of 58%, for SARS-CoV-2 23%, and 39% for CAP vaccines. Most smokers and ex-smokers were vaccinated for influenza as it is considered safer ($p<0.001$) than SARS-CoV-2 ($p<0.003$). Reasons for low COVID-19 immunization rate were fear of side effects (22.5%), doubt on efficacy (27%), unawareness of updated vaccine (13.5%), doubt on safety (20%), and lack of data (17%). Smoking may be a significant risk of flu ($p<0.01$) and of CAP ($p<0.03$), but a moderate risk of SARS-CoV-2 ($p<0.07$). Current smokers with a higher Fagerström Test intend to get vaccinated for CAP (33%) and (26%) for SARS-CoV-2. Only 37.7% of responders recommended vaccinations, and 21% were willing to undergo a Tobacco Cessation Program.

Conclusions

Health promotion and education programs are needed to improve HCW's knowledge about vaccination and immunization coverage.

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Tobacco industry and harm reduction... An inherent contradiction

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Introduction

The WHO/FCTC defines tobacco control as a range of supply, demand, and harm reduction strategies. However, it remains silent on the ways to conduct the latter strategy, harm reduction. The tobacco industry has taken advantage of this gap to appropriate the concept of harm reduction and make it its main marketing theme for its new nicotine-based or heated tobacco products. It also uses it to divide the tobacco control community.

Methods

The concept of tobacco harm reduction is defined by reference to its historical evolution, looking at documents produced by public health and tobacco control experts on one hand and documents emanating from the tobacco industry and its front groups on the other. A theoretical model is developed to capture the key differences between the two approaches to harm reduction.

Results

It is shown that, when used by the tobacco industry, "harm reduction" has a radically different meaning from its meaning when used in public health. For the tobacco industry, the determinants of harm reduction are the free market "laws" and the maximization of profits. For public health, the determinants are ethical considerations and minimization of the health and social burden caused by the addiction to tobacco and nicotine products. The two kinds of determinants are contradictory and irreconcilable.

Conclusions

The tobacco industry's use of harm reduction is inherently at odds with the ethics of public health. Instead of rejecting harm reduction, the tobacco control community should re-appropriate it and give it its true public health meaning.

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Parental smoking and congenital heart defects: An update on evidence and current trends

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Congenital heart defects (CHDs) are the most prevalent of all birth disabilities and the leading cause of death in the first year of life. The etiology of CHDs is complex and underlies the interaction of environmental exposures and genetic factors. However, there is growing evidence that active and passive smoking of parents is

associated with an increased risk of CHD in their offspring not only during gestation but even during the early period before pregnancy. Most studies in the past had focused on the pregnancy period, mainly during the first trimester. Nowadays, there is a trend regarding preconception research that predominately focuses on maternal modifiable risks and health behaviors associated with pregnancy and offspring outcomes. Therefore, the smoking habits of parents, along with their exposure to passive smoking during the periconceptional and pregnancy periods, are of great importance. Research findings indicate that the risk for a cardiovascular congenital disability is increased with the level of fetal tobacco, suggesting a dose effect and increased risk in certain CHD subtypes. Moreover, the literature has focused mainly on maternal smoking. Still, several recently published papers indicate a possible association between both parents' periconceptional smoking habits, indicating that paternal smoking has a clear association as well. This presentation aims to update current knowledge regarding the cardiovascular teratogenic effect of passive and active smoking and to present current trends regarding the time that parents quit smoking to avoid congenital disabilities and the effect of the knowledge gap on their decision. The current evidence and the trends underline once again the importance of population-based prevention strategies, with a special focus on the youth population, to encourage both parents (men and women) to quit smoking early before the decision to become parents, to avoid birth malformations and to support a healthy pregnancy and offspring health.

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Tobacco control efforts during the ongoing war: Ukraine policy case study

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Introduction

In 2018, the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) adopted decision FCTC/COP8(20), urging countries in complex emergencies to maintain their commitment to tobacco control. This decision emphasized critical obligations under the FCTC, including surveillance, legislation, cessation services, awareness campaigns, and measures to counter tobacco industry interference. Since then, the global health landscape has evolved into a state of "permacrisis," marked by the convergence of the pandemic, climate change, and conflict. Ukraine has been enduring Europe's most severe military conflict since the Russian Federation's unprovoked invasion in February 2022. This ongoing crisis has strained public health systems, including tobacco control efforts. In December 2021, after years of debate, the Ukrainian Parliament enacted significant reforms to the country's tobacco control legislation. Despite the war, the government has pursued a dual-track approach, focusing on resilience, recovery, and reforms. This review assesses Ukraine's implementation of FCTC/COP8(20), highlighting the challenges and successes in sustaining and advancing tobacco control during the crisis.

Methods

This review evaluates Ukraine's progress in tobacco control using the critical pillars of FCTC/COP8(20). It examines the government's ability to maintain achievements while addressing emerging threats, aiming to inform future discussions on tobacco control in emergency settings.

Results

Ukraine has remained committed to advancing its tobacco control measures despite the ongoing war. Despite significant challenges, the country has demonstrated resilience and dedication to its FCTC obligations.

Surveillance: Ukraine maintained its tobacco control surveillance system, monitoring nicotine and tobacco use among youth and adults. National surveys, including those based on GATS and GYTS, were conducted with support from development partners.

Protecting Policies from Industry Interference: Ukraine successfully upheld strong legislation, taxation, and enforcement mechanisms despite the tobacco industry's attempts to exploit the crisis. Collaboration among government ministries, public agencies, NGOs, and international organizations, including WHO, played a key role.

Legislation: Ukraine's tobacco control laws remain aligned with FCTC and EU TPD obligations. Efforts are ongoing to further harmonize with EU standards, including implementing a trace-and-track system for tobacco products.

Enforcement: The tobacco control enforcement infrastructure was maintained across government-controlled territories. Despite a moratorium on business inspections, the Ministry of Health (MOH) prioritized tobacco enforcement through comprehensive checklists and support for disease control centers.

Cessation Services: MOH integrated smoking cessation into its emergency response, developed a dedicated website with resources, offered free online training for medical staff, and included QR codes on cigarette packs linked to cessation services. Additional services, such as a hotline and chatbot, are being developed.

Awareness Campaigns: Despite challenging conditions, campaigns raised awareness about the risks of tobacco and nicotine use and promoted cessation services.

Training: Ukraine continued to invest in capacity-building for both governmental and non-governmental sectors, actively participating in regional and global tobacco control training and networking events.

Illicit Tobacco Trade: Ukraine remained actively engaged in international efforts to combat the illicit tobacco trade, regularly reporting to the Convention Secretariat and promoting the ratification of the Illicit Trade Protocol.

Conclusions

Ukraine has demonstrated remarkable resilience in maintaining its tobacco control efforts during the ongoing war. The country adhered to the FCTC/COP8(20) decision with the support of WHO, the European Commission, CTFK, Vital Strategies, and others. However, emerging challenges, including deteriorating infrastructure, reduced staff capacity, and political instability, continue to threaten progress as the tobacco industry seeks to exploit the crisis.

The global response to tobacco control in emergencies remains undocumented. Ukraine's experience highlights the need for continued international support and raises important questions for future COP meetings on addressing tobacco control in similar

contexts.

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Educational program for nursing professionals of general and psychiatric hospitals in smoking cessation techniques

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Introduction

According to the World Health Organization, tobacco kills more than 8 million people each year, including an estimated 1.3 million non-smokers who are exposed to second-hand smoke. The potential of nurses in preventative healthcare has mostly been untapped. The general purpose of the program is to train the nurses of the general and psychiatric hospitals of Attica in smoking cessation techniques. In addition, the aim is to raise nurses' awareness of their smoking habits.

Methodology

A total of 25 nurses participated from four hospitals in Attica: two Psychiatric hospitals (Eginitio Hospital and "Dafni" Psychiatric Hospital of Attica) and two General Hospitals (Athens "Evangelismos" General Hospital and Athens General State Hospital "Georgios Gennimatas"). The meetings with the trainers were every week, online. The study and training material and the trainees' evaluation questionnaires were available on the e-class platform of KEDIVIM of EKPA.

Results

Twenty-three out of 25 fellows completed the program, completing all weekly assessment-comprehension tests. 68% of participants report that they are very satisfied with the smoking cessation education material. All respondents report that after their training, they will try to help patients reduce or stop smoking and that they feel confident about providing the counseling (76% enough or very confident). Of the smokers (n=10), 90% reported that they were affected in terms of their smoking habits.

Conclusions

According to the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) standards, nurses should discuss smoking cessation with their patients. This is an important public health responsibility, but to carry it out, nurses must understand the causes and barriers to quitting smoking and be aware of the available options for patient support.

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The road ahead: Improving smoking cessation outcomes for Roma women

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Introduction

Tobacco consumption during pregnancy is a significant public health concern due to its adverse effects on both maternal and fetal health. Roma women, a marginalized ethnic group in Europe, face unique challenges that may impact smoking behavior and, therefore, cessation efforts. This systematic review seeks to comprehensively synthesize the existing literature on tobacco use patterns and intervention programs designed specifically for Roma women during pregnancy.

Methods

A comprehensive systematic search used the PICO acronym and relevant MeSH terms. Adhering to the PRISMA guidelines, relevant articles published between 2014 and 2024 were systematically searched for in the online databases PubMed/Medline, Google Scholar, Scopus, and Web of Science.

Results

Culturally tailored and community-based interventions were most effective in reducing smoking among pregnant Roma women, with significant reductions observed in studies that included specific counseling and educational programs. Mobile health (mHealth) interventions showed modest success, particularly in rural areas. However, persistent barriers such as stress, low socioeconomic status, and limited access to healthcare continued to impede smoking cessation efforts. The studies emphasized the importance of addressing cultural and social factors to improve cessation outcomes in this population.

Conclusions

This systematic review underscores the nascent evidence base for smoking cessation interventions targeting Roma women in Europe. While culturally tailored approaches show promise, further research is needed to refine and adapt these interventions to address the distinctive socio-cultural dynamics that shape smoking behaviors within this population. Future studies should prioritize rigorous methodologies and comprehensive outcome assessments to inform evidence-based strategies that aim to reduce smoking prevalence and enhance maternal and newborn health outcomes among Roma communities.

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Impact of opioid vaping on oral health

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Introduction

The fundamental intention of this study is to explore cannabinoid use in e-cigarettes, the rate of their consumption by adolescents and adult smokers, and their hazardous impact on oral health and treatment.

Methods

A detailed search has been conducted on Medline/PubMed, Nature, Google Scholar, and Academia for this study. Keywords like Cannabis, cannabinoids, electronic cigarettes, cigarettes,

e-cigarettes, and e-cigs were utilized to guide the search. Additional filters were used, focusing the search on the last decade (2014-2024). Multiple publications were chosen exclusively in English. Of the 65 publications handpicked, 26 were used as the most relevant.

Results

The use of cannabinoids, delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and cannabidiol (CBD), as its predecessor, in electronic cigarettes is widespread. Users can utilize advanced vaping devices without being detected, commonly called stealth vaping. Regular cannabis smokers appear to choose e-cigarette aerosols with organoleptic solid qualities. Multiple surveys stated that the use of electronic delivery systems to inhale cannabis was more popular among 14–to 18-year-old students compared with middle school students and adults. There also appears to be a strong association between adolescent e-cigarette use and subsequent cannabis use. The highest usage rates can be observed among young adults, especially for mood-changing reasons. Cannabis (marijuana) use has seen an increase and also has risks for oral health and dental treatment, while recreational or addictive canna-vaping is theoretically possible. But more importantly, the emergence of this "new youth culture of vaping" could weaken the efficiency of anti-smoking campaigns and measures.

Canna-vaping introduces numerous hazards for general health, including Lung and respiratory problems, cardiac arrhythmias, and bronchial mucosa damage, as well as oral health. Such conditions include dental caries, erosion, staining, periodontal and gum inflammation, infections, xerostomia, and cancerous and precancerous lesions.

Conclusions

Opioid Vaping, in many ways, can threaten its users' systematic and oral health. It deserves urgent scientific investigation and strict risk assessments, which are especially important when young people are concerned. Governments should take measures to increase awareness and take precautionary action against uncontrolled canna-vaping among adolescents, introducing age restrictions for purchasing such products.

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Indoor air quality in dental offices and premises: The negative impact of chemical substances, invasive and smoking plumes

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In recent years, it has become evident that low air quality in healthcare settings in the context of increased work pressure may be detrimental to healthcare personnel and patients. For instance, operating rooms, where the chemical burden and organic contaminators are frequently combined, are considered a case of low air quality index. In many studies, the quantification of the amount of Total Volatile Compounds (TVOCs), which were emitted from commonly used dental substances in a controlled dental micro-environment (surface disinfectants including both sprays and tissues, bonding agents, and acrylic substances), was assessed. Significant differences were observed between TVOCs emitted from sprays, which, in general, were substantially higher than TVOCs emitted from wipes (average TVOCs conc. from sprays 8.327 ppb, while the respective value for tissues is 496 ppb). An effort was made to assess the dependence of the measured TVOC concentrations on environmental factors such as wind speed and ventilation rates. It was found that the influence of environmental factors is not traceable, indicating the importance of emission patterns. When new technology of tissue removal is applied, and, more specifically, when using a laser on hard dental tissues, it was found that Er Yag laser activity is associated with high PM and TVOC concentration values. Many experiments resulted in a greater increase for PM2.5 than PM10, with all remaining above safety limits. This is an aspect professionals should consider, as severe health problems are attributed to fine particles. It was also found that TVOCs generated by the Er Yag laser's activity immediately exceeded and remained above safety limits values for more than 2 hours after the completion of the laser's workFinally when tobacco smoking is experienced indoors by healthcare personnel, even in auxiliary spaces the TVOCs are slightly increased. Still, the CO2, PM2.5, and PM 10 levels are extremely high, in short time intervals. In conclusion, in a heavily air-polluted environment, due to the hovering microdroplets and chemical pollution, as the dental offices are, it is necessary that any kind of smoking activity is prohibited, even when powerful air purifier apparatus or installations are available.

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The impact of e-cigarettes on oral health

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Introduction

Perform a review of the scientific literature and inform the medical society of the oral health risks that can arise from using of e-cigarettes.

Methods

For the study, the available literature was reviewed in the PubMed database, without setting a time limit for existing articles, in the English language, using the keywords: tobacco, e-cigarettes, vape, periodontal disease, oral cancer, inflammation, oral diseases, periodontitis, smoking, oral health, nicotine, smoking cessation. The following websites were also navigated: World Dental Federation (FDI), the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), and Tobacco-Induced Diseases (TID). Of the 60 relevant publications, 28 were used.

Results

Electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes), which are nicotine-based products, were introduced in 2006. Since then, their usage has rapidly increased, especially among the youth. In 2014, e-cigarettes became the most commonly used tobacco product among young adults, which remains so until now. The researchers found that the content and structure of e-cigarettes can cause oral

health risks affecting the teeth, the periodontium, the microbiome, the tongue, and the gums. The e-liquid components increase the formation of biofilm and microbial adhesion, resulting in dental caries. Furthermore, the e-cig aerosols increase the inflammatory response, oxidative stress, and destructive inflammatory cytokines, resulting in periodontitis and peri-implantitis. There have also been indications about the role of e-cigarettes in pre-malignant and malignant oral lesions, with the latter needing further investigation.

Conclusions

E-cigarettes, which are widely used, especially by teenagers and young adults, pose an important threat to oral health. For this reason, they should not be used as a "safe" alternative to conventional cigarettes. Instead, health professionals and governments ought to intensify their efforts and campaign for smoking cessation of any kind of nicotine/tobacco-based product.

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Automation of time series analysis of Google trends data in R studio using autonomous AI agents

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Introduction

Google Trends (GT) is an open-access data source on the search interests of populations in a certain country and time frame. The Relative Search Volume is the normalized measure used to represent the search interest on a scale of 1 to 100, with a value of 0 indicating insufficient data.

Time Series Analysis refers to characterizing data collected periodically during a longer period using appropriate statistical methods, plots, and models. The gold standard of Time Series Analysis is Modeling and forecasting. This paper describes the development of a program in R to automate the time series analysis of Google Trends Data and the use of autonomous AI agents in its development.

Methods

Blackbox Robocoder AI, an autonomous AI agent, was used to develop, debug and improve an R code, automizing time series analysis of Google Trends Data using only natural language. The resulting code was tested in R studio on Data from Google Trends for different Topics and Terms in different countries and timeframes.

Results

A fully working R script was developed, which imports the raw Data file (.csv), identifies variable names, and defines the time variable. Furthermore, it generates the following plots using normal and differenced data: Line, Seasonal, Subseries, Scatter Plot, Histogram, Lag Plot, Autocorrelation, and partial autocorrelation plots. Furthermore, code for STL (seasonal trend decomposition by Loess) was developed to decompose additive time series or log-transformed multiplicative time series, plotting and saving the results for standard and differenced data and replacing missing values using linear interpolation.

Conclusions

This paper demonstrates that autonomous AI agents can support researchers in developing R scripts faster, using natural language exclusively. However, expertise and understanding of the code and resulting statistics are indispensable. The developed R script can characterize GT Data for different keywords, timeframes, and countries, providing an extensive statistical report.

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Digitized Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT): Based intervention for vaping cessation in youth (ACT-TO-STOP)

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Introduction

Vaping behavior is becoming very common among adolescents and young adults globally. While health risks are numerous, only a few interventions target vaping cessation in this population. Traditional treatments are underutilized by youth as they often fail to engage users. Using innovative and digital approaches is necessary to increase engagement in treatment among this population. The current project aims to assess the usability, engagement, and effectiveness of a mobile intervention based on Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) to promote vaping cessation in adolescents and young adults aged 13-29 in Cyprus. The overarching goal of this project is to contribute to the "Tobacco Endgame" strategy in Cyprus and reduce unhealthy behaviors such as vaping through digital interventions.

Methods

This project employs a co-development approach that incorporates user feedback and expert opinions, to create a culturally appropriate, gamified application. The pilot phase will include 20 participants to test usability. Afterward, a randomized controlled trial (RCT) will be conducted, with participants (n=150) being randomly allocated to either the experimental or the control group. The outcomes will include readiness to quit, 24-hour quit attempts, and 30-day abstinence at six months post-randomization.

Results

Results will outline the procedural steps, the co-development process, and the final application.

Conclusions

The findings and conclusions will be discussed.

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The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

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Why is tobacco consumption increasing in Turkey?

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Introduction

From 2008 onwards, Turkey legislated smoke-free, comprehensive TAPS bans, more than 80% tax burden, pictorial health warnings, plain packaging, media campaigns, and quitline service. GATS was run three times, and GYTS four times to monitor implementation. Based on a 13.4% relative decline in prevalence between 2008-2012, in 2013, Turkey was declared the first country protecting its entire population with all MPOWER measures at the highest level.

However, GATS 2016 showed that a smoking prevalence of 27.1% in 2012 rose to 31.6 in 2016. Women's prevalence rose by 46.6% in the same period. The Health Survey 2022 indicated prevalence at 32.1%, a 20% relative increase between 2012-2022. Women's prevalence rose by 38.3%. To underscore the unprecedented growth in smoking prevalence and volume in Turkey against the backdrop of parallel running supply-side policies.

Methods

Review of official 2003-2023 data on tobacco manufacturing, trade, and prevalence/volume.

Results

During 2003-2023, extensive legislation augmenting tobacco manufacturing and trade was adopted. Incentives to tobacco companies specifically geared toward increased manufacturing were granted, and the country underwent a regime change that dismantled existing tobacco control governance, replacing it with a highly centralized, non-transparent, unaccountable anti-addiction rhetoric and administration.

Cigarette manufacturing grew by 3.4 billion sticks/year on average. Two new sub-brands were put on the market every month. Legal cigarette sales reached a record 189 billion sticks in 2023, rising by an unprecedented 4.13 % compound annual growth rate since 2013. Manufacturing and consumption growth was even more pronounced in other tobacco products.

Conclusions

The international tobacco control community should take notice that tobacco control has been grossly undermined in Turkey and draw lessons from the Turkish experience on how to curb the supply side to improve the effectiveness of demand-side measures and avoid regression.

Conflicts of interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

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Smoking legislation in Romania: Impact and challenges

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Introduction

Over the past five decades, Romania has enacted several legislative measures to combat tobacco use. Despite these efforts, smoking prevalence remains high, particularly among younger demographics. Along with EU directives, tobacco-related legislation plays a crucial role in shaping public health policies and outcomes. This study evaluates the impact of Romania's tobacco control legislation, focusing on critical laws introduced in the last 50 years. It examines the effectiveness of these laws in reducing smoking rates and exposure to second-hand smoke.

Methods

Romania's tobacco control legislation was reviewed, including Law No. 349/2002 on tobacco prevention, Law No. 15/2016 on smoking in enclosed public spaces, and Law No. 209/2018 regulating electronic cigarettes and heated tobacco products. Tax policies and the transposition of EU directives, such as the 2014/40/EU Tobacco Products Directive, were also analyzed. National health surveys and public reports provided data on smoking trends.

Results

The 2016 smoking ban significantly reduced second-hand smoke exposure in public spaces. However, smoking rates, particularly among males and adolescents, remain high. Increased excise taxes and advertising restrictions under Law No. 332/2005 have led to a modest reduction in consumption. Enforcement remains inconsistent, especially in rural areas. The adoption of EU directives has strengthened the regulatory framework but has yet to achieve a substantial decline in smoking rates.

Conclusions

Romania's legislative efforts have produced positive outcomes, especially in reducing second-hand smoke exposure and limiting tobacco advertising. However, challenges in enforcement and high smoking rates among certain populations persist. Strengthening enforcement and public health campaigns, alongside continued alignment with EU regulations, is essential for further progress.

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Example of tobacco and related products prevention actions for youth aged 11 to 24 years in French-speaking Belgium

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Smoking remains the leading preventable cause of morbidity and mortality worldwide, disproportionately impacting individuals from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. In Belgium, 19% of the population smoked in 2018, with 15% being daily smokers. Although youth tobacco use has decreased, new products like flavored disposable vapes, snus, and electronic cigarettes are becoming more popular, especially through social media. In 2023, 38% of Belgian youth aged 15-20 experimented with vapes, and 16% became regular users, with initiation increasingly occurring through electronic rather than traditional cigarettes. The NPO FARES' Tobacco Prevention Service, established in 1986, uses a non-stigmatizing, preventive approach to reduce tobacco initiation, minimize risks, and enhance cessation rates. It targets professionals in education, healthcare, and social sectors, providing tailored, long-term interventions such as

project support, experiential workshops, and certified training in tobacco control. The service continuously evolves, incorporating innovative methods like gender-sensitive, participatory, and peer-to-peer approaches and fostering life skills to promote health and mitigate risky behaviors among youth. Since 2022, under regional tobacco prevention plans, the service has been developing projects targeting youth aged 11 to 24 years in French-speaking Belgium. The service has supported 54 prevention projects, conducted 35 activities with youth, and trained 576 professionals. Despite a decline in smoking rates among young people, the rise of alternative nicotine consumption methods highlights the ongoing need for this project. The participatory approach, which involves youth directly in prevention efforts, has been effective. However, there is a call for more targeted content and youth-friendly communication, particularly through peer education strategies.

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Trends in smoking initiation, sex, and regional differences: A repeat cross-sectional study in the European Union between 1940 and 2019

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Introduction

In the European Union (EU), one in five young people aged 15 to 24 currently smokes, with more than half establishing regular smoking by the age of 18. Information on the long-term historical trends of smoking initiation across the EU remains scarce. This study sought to examine trends in initiation rates of regular smoking in the EU over the last 80 years.

Methods

We analyzed data from representative, repeat cross-sectional surveys of EU residents aged 15 and older (n = 108,856) collected across four waves of the Special Eurobarometer survey: 77.1 (2012), 82.4 (2014), 87.1 (2017), and 93.2 (2020). Using a reconstructed approach based on each participant's age, smoking status, and age at regular smoking onset for each calendar year, we estimated age-specific initiation rates (for ages 10-24) and age-group-specific rates (for age-group 10-17, 18-24, and 10-24) by sex, region, and country for each calendar decade from 1940 to 2019.

Results

EU-overall initiation rates among those aged 10-24 have significantly declined compared to the peak period: for males, from 5.7% (95% CI = 5.6-5.9%) in the 1970s to 3.2% (95% CI = 3.0-3.3%) in the 2010s and for females from 3.9% (95% CI = 3.7-4.0%) in the 1990s to 2.4% (95% CI = 2.3-2.5%) in the 2010s. The decline was more pronounced in young adults aged 18-24 than legal minors aged 10-17, with the minors' rates surpassing those of young adults during the 2010s. Sex and regional disparities have narrowed over the study period, while the rates among legal minors have remained stagnant in Southern Europe since 1980 and have an upward trend in Eastern Europe.

Conclusions

The downward trend in youth smoking initiation reflects progress in tobacco control within the EU. However, despite the ban on tobacco sales to minors, an unacceptably high number of youths still began smoking regularly before the age of 18. Our results suggest that enforcing stricter EU-wide tobacco control policy focus on minors and introducing smoke-free generation initiatives, such as the Tobacco 21 law, could potentially reduce future tobacco use by limiting minors' access to tobacco products.

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Tactics of the tobacco industry to attract young people on the Internet

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Introduction

Tobacco use is a leading cause of death globally, claiming over 8 million lives annually.

In Ukraine alone, tobacco-related diseases cause over 100,000 premature deaths each year.

Despite existing legislation banning tobacco advertising and promotion of sales, aggressive online marketing by tobacco companies continues, targeting Ukrainian youth. Demonstrate the illegal actions of tobacco companies that violate Ukrainian legislation and international standards. Show the various methods used by tobacco companies to attract new consumers.

Methods

NGO 'LIFE' analyzed the tactics employed by tobacco companies to advertise and market tobacco products and heated tobacco devices online. Several chatbots were analyzed, including "Bot Philip" ("PM Ukraine" PrJSC), "IQOS Ukraine" ("LSP" LLC), and "Workshop"("BAT Sales and Marketing Ukraine" LLC) that provide individualized recommendations on tobacco products, offers of goods at discounted prices or bundled with other services via messengers and websites. Loyalty programs "Ploom Club"

(JTI) and "O`go Club" (BAT) have also been studied and are designed to incentivize tobacco purchases through discounts, rewards, and point accumulation. The main target audience for such advertising is young people.

Results

The article 'Deadly addiction: how the tobacco industry preys on children and young people through the Internet' was published in the media, revealing tobacco compa'ies' Internet tactics. The analysis results on systematic violation of the ban on online advertising were sent to the supervisory authority of the State Service of Ukraine for Food Safety and Consumer Protection.

Conclusions

The tobacco industry is increasingly using the Internet as a tool to aggressively engage young people in the epidemic of tobacco and nicotine use, which creates additional risks for the health care system. The solution to the problem is to ban the sale of tobacco and nicotine products via the Internet, and enforce the ban on advertising without any exceptions.

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Swedish Tobacco Policy: Key learnings to decrease smoking

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EU's Beating Cancer Plan aims to reach a tobacco-free generation in 2040. Are nicotine products adding to the problem, or are they a tool to reach that goal? In Sweden, smoking rates have decreased over time, and nicotine pouches/whitesnus and e-cigarettes have high availability, affordability, and attractiveness. The aim is to provide a tool for visualizing successful tobacco control measures and less successful tobacco control approaches, using examples from Sweden. The aim is also to offer the best available knowledge on the connection between snus use, e-cigarette use, and cigarette smoking. Prevalence data on tobacco and nicotine use from the Public Health Agency of Sweden, The Swedish Council for Information on Alcohol and Other Drugs (CAN), and The Swedish Agency for Health Technology Assessment and Assessment forSocial Services (SBU) is used together with a timeline of tobacco control measures in Sweden to create a paper on key learnings on tobacco control measures in Sweden. Reviews conducted by The Swedish Agency for Health Technology Assessment and Assessment for Social Services (SBU) on the connection between e-cigarettes and snus and tobacco smoking and by the Swedish Consumer Agency on company compliance with regulation in marketing are used. Sweden has implemented decisive policy changes over time that have led to its low smoking rates. A steady increase in taxes, age limit, ban on tobacco advertising, oversight mechanisms, early introduction of smoke-free public places, and cost-free smoke cessation services have all successfully reached the current level of 6 percent. Total nicotine and tobacco use is 19 percent. White snus was unregulated in Sweden until 2022 when it was marketed and sold to young people. Regulations after 2022 include an age limit for sales and marketing, which must be modest and non-intrusive, but legal compliance regarding the marketing of white snus towards young people is a problem. Sweden has seen a sharp increase in snus use since white snus was introduced on the market, especially among young women who historically have not used snus. Many of the young users who start using nicotine products have not previously used tobacco. In the general public, a decrease in smoking rates has been a trend over time, whereas the trend in snus use has increased during the last years. The use of e-cigarettes is increasing among young people at an alarming rate, while e-cigarette use is still uncommon among adults. The total nicotine use in Sweden is currently increasing. A coherent tobacco policy is needed to achieve a tobacco-free Europe, where less than 5 percent of the population use tobacco by 2040. This must include all products available on the EU market, both tobacco and non-medicinal nicotine products.

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The Green Crescent Model: Addressing tobacco addiction and supporting sustainable health, agriculture, and pollution reduction

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Tobacco addiction poses a serious global public health challenge, with 41.3% of Türkiye's population using tobacco as of 20221. The Turkish Green Crescent Society, through its Green Crescent Counselling Centers (YEDAM), provides structured, evidence-based rehabilitation services to address this issue. In addition to the direct health impacts of tobacco, its cultivation and use contribute to environmental degradation, pollution, and socio-economic exploitation. The YEDAM model not only addresses addiction but also advocates for sustainable agricultural transitions, aligning with global efforts to reduce pollution, such as the Plastic Treaty, and policies aimed at minimizing tobacco-related environmental waste, a key focus of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC)7 through international advocacy and collaboration. This presentation highlights Green Crescent's comprehensive approach to tobacco cessation and its broader role in promoting environmental sustainability.

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Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) and the Tobacco Industry: An inherent contradiction

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Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) is recognized as a valuable tool for environmental management of products' end-of-life impacts. However, when applied to the tobacco industry, it faces significant challenges due to the industry's historical manipulation of health policies. This study explores the inherent contradictions in using EPR schemes for tobacco products, which are designed to make producers accountable for the life cycle of their products, including end-of-life impacts, particularly in light of the upcoming UN Plastics Treaty, which aims to standardize and enhance global EPR applications. The study highlights the potential for tobacco companies to exploit these schemes to weaken health regulations and greenwash their public image. By examining frameworks like the European Union (EU) Single-Use Plastics Directive alongside the UN Plastics Treaty negotiations, the study stresses the need for stringent safeguards to ensure EPR schemes are not tools for greenwashing but support health and environmental objectives. The study also proposes enhanced regulatory measures, such as redefining EPR for tobacco as "Extended Producer Liability" and integrating it with World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) guidelines.

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Association of high temperatures with cardiovascular and respiratory mortality in a context of high smoking prevalence: The case of Greece

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Introduction

Climate change presents a significant threat to human health. Increased temperatures can aggravate COPD and asthma and exacerbate the effect of factors such as air pollution or pollen, which are known to affect these diseases. Older people, people with multiple chronic diseases, and deprived populations are affected the most by high temperatures. Quantifying this variation is crucial to inform adaptation to heat policies and to shed light on how effect modifiers such as deprivation, green space, and smoking modify this effect.

Methods

Daily data on all-cause mortality at the NUTS3 administrative regions (nomos) during 2000-2019 in Greece by age and sex was retrieved from the Hellenic Statistical Authority. The daily mean temperature at 9kmx9km was retrieved from the ERA-5 reanalysis dataset. We employed a case-crossover study design to examine all-cause mortality, cardiovascular and respiratory mortality by age (75<, 75-84, 85+) and sex (male and female), focusing on the effect of heatwaves (deaths occurring during April to September) using six different definitions (durations = >2 or >3 days and thresholds = 90%, 95% and 99% of the annual space specific temperature percentile). We fitted Bayesian conditional Poisson regression models and examined how the effect varies in time and at the NUTS3 region level.

Results

We retrieved 216,758 cardiorespiratory deaths from April and September during 2000-2019. Most of the deaths were among females (52%). Overall, we observed an increasing effect of heatwaves on cardiovascular and respiratory mortality with increasing duration and temperature thresholds. We also observed an overall decreasing trend of the heatwave effect across the study periods in all heatwave definitions, apart from our most extreme definition, where we observed an increasing trend. We observed weak evidence of spatial vulnerabilities.

Conclusions

Heatwaves are associated with cardiovascular and respiratory mortality in Greece in the context of a high prevalence of smoking and COPD.

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Lessons learned from a community-based participatory research project developing a smoking cessation app in socioeconomically disadvantaged areas

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Introduction

Smoking disproportionately harms socioeconomically disadvantaged groups in Sweden, contributing to health inequities. Previous research suggests tailoring smoking cessation interventions and incorporating relapse prevention strategies such as social support and stress coping can be effective. Using mobile apps can provide increased access to individualized and timely cessation support. This project aims to develop and evaluate the feasibility of a digital smoking cessation tool through a collaborative, co-creative approach involving experts, healthcare providers, and representatives from the target group in disadvantaged areas. The presentation aims to share experiences and challenges related to the co-creation process between researchers, local organizations, healthcare providers, and the target group. This includes difficulties with recruitment, mismatched expectations, and navigating the dynamics between marginalized groups, the research process, and social inclusion.

Methods

In the presentation, we discuss the co-creation process based on our experiences, supported by data and documentation from the research process. This includes recruiting "recruiters" in healthcare and local settings, establishing and maintaining a reference group, conducting interviews, and directly involving the target group in prototype development and feedback.

Results

A fundamental insight is the inherent "object/subject" divide,

where the research structure can perpetuate a distance between the target group and researchers, reinforcing a sense of detachment. This disconnect underscores the need for more inclusive; participatory research approaches that bridge the gap between academics and marginalized communities. Other key lessons learned include the importance of the reference group as an intermediary, the difficulty researchers face in building trust with the target population, and the value of involving "practitioners" with community relationships and insights.

Conclusions

The project highlights significant challenges in co-creating meaningful health interventions with socioeconomically disadvantaged groups.

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Smoking cessation in times of war in Ukraine: How multi-channel campaigns drive smoking cessation

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Introduction

Smoking is a major health concern in Ukraine, causing 130,000 deaths annually. According to a 2023 WHO survey, 27% of respondents currently use tobacco. While 63% of smokers want to quit, success rates are low without support. The smoking cessation service (https://stopsmoking.org.ua/) offers professional recommendations on how to quit smoking, increasing awareness of the adverse health risks of tobacco use. Increasing awareness of the benefits of quitting smoking and promoting the smoking cessation service.

Methods

The PHC of the MOH of Ukraine, NGO Life, and WHO Country Office in Ukraine conducted the multichannel mass-media campaign "Quit smoking with professional support".

The creative concepts and messages were validated through qualitative research, including in-depth focus group studies with the target audience.

The campaign materials included video and audio ads, outdoor banners, Google banner ads, and multiple waves of social media campaigns. They also included supportive messages about the benefits of quitting and a call to use the smoking cessation service.

Results

The campaign materials were disseminated through television, radio, Kyiv metro, outdoor advertising, and an online campaign. Numerous channels were engaged as social advertising pro bono, saving hundreds of thousands of US dollars.

The available data on campaign reach is diverse. Estimated that the campaign garnered 35 million impressions on YouTube and Google. The Facebook campaign achieved more than 1 million impressions, radio inter-program ads reached almost 970,000 listeners, and outdoor ads were exposed to more than 18 million potential views.

During the campaign, the total number of smoking cessation service visitors increased by 400% in total compared to the period before the campaign.

Conclusions

Regular smoking cessation mass-media campaigns can increase quitting success and change social norms around tobacco use.

Mass media communication is an integral component that supports the tobacco control strategy. During the war, it is especially important to continue strong tobacco control activities and provide support to smokers who want to quit.

We can increase their chances of success by providing additional support and resources to smokers who want to quit. A government-funded smoking cessation hotline would be a valuable tool in this effort.

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Medical students' opinions on brief tobacco cessation training: A cross-sectional study

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Introduction

Doctors should take the lead in tobacco control efforts. Practical skills training for cessation advice and counseling should be part of undergraduate medical education. To evaluate medical students' opinions on the acceptance, difficulty level, self-confidence to intervene, and the utility of a brief tobacco cessation training for their future practice.

Methods

The training was a B-learning: 1) World Health Organization (WHO) brief tobacco cessation e-learning and 2) a clinical workshop. A questionnaire-based cross-sectional study was applied to students engaged in the training. Fourth-year medical students who completed the B-learning were invited to answer the questionnaire adapted from the WHO original one. Setting: University of Beira Interior Medical School, Portugal.

Results

Participants: 276; 71.4% female; mean age: 22.7 ± 2.9 years. The participation rate was 82.63%. Tobacco prevalence was 10.9%: 7.2 % in females and 20.3% in males, p=0.002. Most were non-daily users (94.9%). Regarding the training, 55.8% agreed and, 37.3% strongly agreed that the e-learning was useful for their practice. Similarly, 51.8% agreed, and 34.1% strongly agreed that the workshop was useful, p=0.008. The perceived usefulness of the workshop was higher among smokers than non-smokers, p= 0.027. Regarding self-confidence to intervene: 56.5% agreed, and 36.2% strongly agreed that e-learning improves their skills; 52.5% agreed, and 34.1% strongly agreed that the workshop also improves it, p=0.026. Concerning the difficulty level, 75.3% found the e-learning easy/very easy, while less (62.0%) found the workshop easy/very easy, p<0.001. Finally, 58.0% reported that the e-learning module was good, and 23.9% said it was excellent. For the workshop, 29% rated it as good, while 62.3% rated it as excellent.

Conclusions
The findings suggest that medical students are aware of the role of undergraduate training in brief tobacco intervention and that this training improves their clinical skills. This type of B-learning should be widely implemented in medical schools.
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Paid employment for 20-year-olds as a risk factor for smoking and e-cigarette use

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Introduction
Outcomes associated with young adult employment status are mixed. The prevalence of smoking and e-cigarette use in this age group is high, and access to disposable income has been linked to increased youth smoking. We examine links between smoking and e-cigarette use and a) being in current paid employment aged 20 years; b) being or having ever been in regular full-time paid employment vs. temporary/part-time/none); and c) links between current paid employment status, social class, and higher education participation.
Methods
We use data from 5,188 20-year-olds from Wave 4 of the longitudinal Growing Up in Ireland study, Cohort '98. Analyses were performed using SPSS v27.
Results
31.4% (n=1,629) of 20-year-olds report being in current paid employment, and 44.6% (n=1,275) report being/having ever been in regular full-time vs other types of employment. Nearly three-quarters report ever-smoking, and almost half e-cigarette ever-use. More than a third report current smoking, and more than one in eight current e-cigarette use and current dual use. 20-year-olds in paid employment and those who are/have been in regular full-time employment are significantly more likely to be ever-smokers, current smokers, ever e-cigarette users, current e-cigarette users, and dual users. 20-year-olds in paid employment are also significantly less likely to be from professional/managerial backgrounds (24% vs. 77%), or higher education (14% vs. 86%).
Conclusions
Being in paid employment or being/having been in regular full-time employment (vs part-time/temporary) are risk factors for smoking and e-cigarette use in 20-year-olds. Paid employment is associated with lower social class and lower participation in higher education. Higher education is associated with enhanced occupational and life outcomes and progression to higher education in Ireland is both high and classed. Young adults working full-time lose out on educational and occupational benefits and require targeted smoking and e-cigarette health education and cessation services.
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Beyond the vape: The perils of Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) in pregnancy

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Introduction
The emergence of electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) has significantly influenced smoking patterns during pregnancy. There has been a global increase in the use of electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) during pregnancy. While ENDS are often perceived as a safer option compared to traditional cigarettes, their potential effects on perinatal outcomes remain unclear. This systematic review sought to investigate the impact of ENDS use during pregnancy.
Methods
We conducted a systematic literature review using the Scopus and Medline (PubMed) databases to identify studies examining the effects of electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) on pregnancy. The search was restricted to English-language publications. The scope of this research was restricted to studies involving human participants, with animal studies being excluded from the analysis.
Results
There is a correlation between ENDS use and an elevated risk of adverse perinatal outcomes, such as small for gestational age (SGA) infants, preterm birth (PB), and low birth weight (LBW). While ENDS are often seen as a less harmful option than traditional cigarettes, the evidence suggests that both pose substantial risks to fetal health.
The most favorable perinatal outcomes are consistently observed among nonsmokers, emphasizing the importance of complete abstinence from both traditional cigarettes and ENDS for pregnant women.
Conclusions
The use of ENDS during pregnancy is linked to substantial adverse perinatal outcomes. These findings underscore the importance of public health policies that advocate for complete abstinence from both traditional cigarettes and ENDS among pregnant women to optimize perinatal health.
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A collaborative project of the medical research agency on new nicotine products in Poland: NIKO study protocol

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There is currently a lack of up-to-date representative data for Poland on the use of nicotine products, in particular novel nicotine products. The study's main objective is to assess the use of nicotine products, including new nicotine-containing products, and to identify health-related risk factors in the Polish population. It is planned that a mixed methods study will be conducted using qualitative methods in the form of individual in-depth interviews (IDI) and quantitative methods in the form of an epidemiological, cross-sectional, questionnaire-based survey. In phase one, IDI will be conducted. A total of 100 respondents from 5 different groups of users of nicotine products will be interviewed: minors aged 12-17, young adults aged 18-25, the LGBT community, pregnant and post-partum women, and young health professionals. A survey questionnaire will be prepared based on the IDI results obtained and the tools used in the PATH study. In the second stage, a pilot questionnaire survey will be carried out on 1,000 people. Based on the results obtained, the questionnaire will be validated. In the third stage, a nationwide representative cross-sectional survey will be conducted on 9,000 people. A random sample of Polish residents will be recruited among men and women aged 12-65, both using and not using nicotine products. The survey is expected to provide information on the prevalence of nicotine product use and differences in attitudes, behaviors, and health perceptions regarding nicotine use in the Polish population. The results obtained will provide valuable data for the development of health policies, including the implementation of age restrictions, regulations on the sale and advertising of new nicotine products, and the preparation of public health interventions that could reduce the long-term impact of nicotine use and the associated social and economic costs.

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A collaborative project of the medical research agency on new nicotine products in Poland: Preliminary results of the IDI survey. A NIKO study

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There is currently a lack of up-to-date representative data for Poland on the use of nicotine products, in particular novel nicotine products. Therefore, the realization of the first phase of a nationally representative NIKO survey in the form of individual in-depth interviews (IDIs) began in June 2024. The main objective of the study is to obtain information on the specific use and perception of nicotine products (nicotine pouches, polyuse, cannabis) in the Polish population, which will help to develop the quantitative study tool. The study has so far been conducted with ten users of nicotine products aged 18-25. The respondents indicated that when choosing a particular type of nicotine product, the choice depends on several factors, such as taste, convenience, and lack of odor. Notably, some respondents stressed that despite the negative aspects of smoking, such as the smell and yellow fingers, they still value traditional cigarettes, which they consider more natural compared to e-cigarettes. Traditional cigarettes and tobacco heaters provide satisfaction in a shorter period and are a kind of ritual that plays an important role in daily life, especially in stressful situations. The respondents emphasized that they do not feel the need to flaunt their smoking and that their family and friends accept their choices, although they sometimes express concern about their habits. The respondents are aware of the harmful effects of nicotine but do not yet feel the adverse effects at this stage. Although the interviewees recognize the adverse effects of nicotine use, their approach to the topic is ambivalent. The preliminary results obtained indicate the strong position of traditional cigarettes among the respondents, as well as their low awareness of the harmfulness of nicotine products.

Conflicts of interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

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Evaluation of new tobacco dependence training for health care professionals in acute inpatient hospitals

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Introduction

Treating tobacco dependence in patients admitted to the hospital leads to substantial, immediate, and long-term benefits for both the individual and the healthcare system. NHS England has committed to delivering tobacco dependence treatment to all people admitted overnight to hospitals who smoke. To summarise best practices and develop key messages and a national treatment plan to assist with standardizing the way we describe and treat tobacco dependence in inpatient settings and support changes to clinical practice.

Material and Methods

A task group of national experts led the development of the key messages and Standard Treatment Plan. The task group deliberated and drafted the key messages and guidance, which were then under expert review by stakeholders. The documents were published by NHS England and the National Centre for Smoking Cessation Training (NCSCT) in March 2024.

Results

Key messages were developed across several thematic areas, which include tobacco dependence in the hospital setting,

tobacco dependence, nicotine and withdrawal symptoms, smoke-free hospitals, tobacco dependence aids, priorities for tobacco dependence treatment, the trust tobacco dependence team, and the importance of post-follow-up support. The Standard Treatment Plan is organized around three tobacco-dependence treatment care bundles: the admission care bundle, the inpatient specialist care bundle, and the discharge care bundle. The key messages (https://www.ncsct.co.uk/publications/inpatient-TDT-key-messages) and the Standard Treatment Plan for inpatient tobacco dependence (https://www.ncsct.co.uk/library/view/pdf/Standard-Treatment-Plan-for-Inpatient-Tobacco-Dependence.pdf) were published in March 2024. A short film featuring these key messages (https://www.ncsct.co.uk/publications/inpatient-acute-TDT-film) and an eLearning were produced to support their dissemination nationally.

Conclusions

These key messages and practice guidance aim to ensure a common approach to treating tobacco dependence in inpatient settings in the English NHS and may serve as a model for other European settings.

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National tobacco dependence treatment training curricula for acute inpatient hospitals

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Introduction

NHS England has committed. Tobacco-dependence advisors have been hired as specialists. Ensuring high-quality evidence-based training is available to support this new workforce is important for be key to increasing the quality and efficacy of support provided to patients.

We sought to document the learning needs of tobacco-dependence advisors working in inpatient hospital settings. We also sought to assess changes in confidence in the delivery of behavior change techniques (BCTs) before and after participation in the new national inpatient tobacco dependence advisor training curriculum. Learner satisfaction with the training was also assessed.

Material and Methods

A survey of tobacco-dependence advisors (n=320) was conducted and used to support course design. The training curricula were developed by the National Centre for Smoking Cessation and Training (NCSCT) developed the training curricula, and six courses were delivered between December 2023 and September 2024. Pre-post course assessment examined changes in participant confidence in the delivery of 20 BCTs.

Results

We surveyed more than 250 tobacco-dependence advisors to assess learning needs. Significant improvements in learner confidence in the twenty evidence-based BCTs were documented following the training ($p<0.05$). The most significant changes in confidence in BCTs were documented for newer advisors. Training course evaluation showed that learners have highly evaluated the training, with 98% of learners reporting that the course improved their knowledge and skills.

Conclusions

The new NHS England national training curricula for inpatient acute and mental health settings have been well evaluated and have increased learners' confidence in delivering evidence-based BCTs. Similar curricula may be recommended for other inpatient settings in Europe.

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Smoking at the beach: A new frontier of tobacco control advocacy

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Introduction

Cigarette butts are the most frequent litter on beaches worldwide. Many countries decided to ban smoking on the beach, introducing fines (e.g., in Spain, fines range from 750€+, including a ban on electronic cigarettes). In Italy, however, the smoking ban on the beaches remains at the discretion of the individual municipalities. As a part of tobacco control activities run by the Italian Society of Tobaccology (SITAB), we developed an online survey to study smoking attitudes and beliefs on the Italian beaches during the summer.

Material and Methods

The survey, developed on Google Forms, was first shared on Rimini beaches during an anti-smoking activity by SITAB on July 19th, 2024, and then shared through social media. The 15 questions collect socio-demographic data, smoking habits, and agreement with the smoking ban on the beaches, as well as smoking limitations proposals.

Results

Three hundred sixty-nine people answered (61.8% female), with a mean age of 52 (min 18, max 88). 33.9% were smokers, smoking a mean of 9 cigarettes/day. 87.5% of the respondents reported smelling smoke at the beach, 34.4% smelt it around three times/day, and 84.3% were bothered by it. 34.1% move away when smoke is around. 76.2% feel health damage because of second-hand smoke at the beach. 93% believe that limiting beach smoking could be a valuable policy for health (74.1% of which were smokers): restricted smoking areas (48.0%) or an absolute smoking ban (38.5%) were the two main options.

Conclusions

These preliminary results show the importance of limiting smoke

at the beach for human and environmental health protection. This is considered, and advocating for a strict smoking law in outdoor places is mandatory. The next step is clinical research to study health symptoms related to beach smoking.

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Tobacco control policy in The Netherlands: A success story under threat

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Introduction

The Netherlands has moved towards the forefront of tobacco control in Europe. Its best practices inspired other countries, but for how long? A recent political regime change threatens the Dutch tobacco control policy.

The aim was to present the factors contributing to recent successes and to give an update on the changing political landscape and how this affects tobacco control.

Results

Necessary tobacco control measures were implemented between 2020 and 2024, including higher tobacco taxes, plain packaging, a point-of-sale tobacco display ban, a smoking ban on school premises, and a ban on the sale of tobacco in supermarkets. Important success factors were adherence to Article 5.3 FCTC, which prevents the government from consulting the tobacco industry, and the emergence of a 'Smoke-free Generation' movement. The Dutch government strengthened tobacco control policy by drafting and implementing a National Prevention Agreement aimed at a tobacco control endgame goal of less than 5% smokers in 2040.

An extremely conservative government has recently come to power in The Netherlands. We notice less attention to tobacco control while the tobacco industry seizes the opportunity, for example, by aggressively attacking tobacco taxation as a tobacco control instrument and promoting alternative nicotine products.

Conclusions

The Dutch casus illustrates that tobacco control is a long-term effort, where continued vigilance is needed when political contexts shift.

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Quitlines in Europe: Overview and developing a network

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Introduction

Quitlines are telephone-based services that provide help with smoking cessation. They can offer multiple services. Even though there are national quitlines in many European countries, there was no comprehensive overview of each quitline and how the services offered fit into the country's overall tobacco control strategy.

The aim was to systematically investigate European quitlines' services and how those services fit within the national tobacco control strategies.

Material and Methods

The study team (authors ST, BHW, PS) collected data about quitlines in Europe from a variety of sources. We first conducted a pragmatic literature review to gain insight into existing quitlines in Europe and their functions. We then extracted data from the websites of each quitline. We collected additional data through quantitative and qualitative surveys that were sent to representatives of all quitlines in Europe.

Results

We identified best practices that may be disseminated throughout Europe based on all the data collected. We also developed a European Quitlines Network to provide more opportunities to collaborate and exchange best practices between quitlines.

Conclusions

We formulated the following recommendations for European quitlines that may help to increase their reach and effectiveness. These include improving the visibility and quality of information on quitline websites, providing proactive e-referrals to increase the number of smokers enrolled in quitline services, offering multiple counseling sessions and discussing using NRT and cessation medication during these sessions, sharing experiences on the use of digital tools to improve service delivery with other quitlines, improving morale and social support for quitline professionals in small organizations or when working from home, and increasing the harmonization of data collection and evaluation of quitlines.

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Collaboration between medical students' associations and tobacco control organizations: Literature review and Focus Group Discussion-TFAC 2023

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Introduction

Tobacco Free Advent Calendar (TFAC) 2023 is a European Tobacco Control and Public Health project that promotes collaboration, innovation, and youth empowerment in tobacco control. The objectives were to evaluate the involvement of medical students' associations in TFAC, identify opportunities and challenges in collaboration between tobacco control and

medical students' associations, and determine best practices for establishing long-term collaborations with medical students' associations within the framework of the European Tobacco Control Youth Movement.

Material and Methods

An online focus group discussion was conducted among members of TFAC, representatives of Tobacco Control (TC) Youth Organizations, and Medical Students' Associations (MSA). Participants were chosen based on their experience in TC or leading MSAs and were asked to conduct a brief literature review in preparation. The meeting was recorded and transcribed using Zoom Pro. Analysis of the anonymized transcript was done digitally in MarginNote 4. Explicit non-official consent of participants was assured, and approval of the ethical committee was not required.

Results

MSA's expressed interest in supporting TC, providing volunteers, and promoting the campaigns to medical students. Challenges, perceived by MSAs, in collaborating with TC organizations are limited time, financial resources, and training. According to MSA's raising awareness on the effects of smoking on health and the university environment is essential. Planning the involvement of medical students in advance, and leadership of peers and mentors were measures proposed by TC representatives to improve collaboration with MSAs, the involvement of medical students in TFAC was appreciated. The literature review evolved around Youth Empowerment Theory, FCTC, and the Involvement of international MSAs in TC.

Conclusions

Time, Resources, and long-term motivation are challenges in collaborating with MSAs. Planning, clear messages, peers, and mentors are crucial in the involvement of MSAs and medical students in TC.

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Loneliness and the possible relationship between smoking and low mood development

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Introduction

The World Health Organization has established a Commission on Social Connection (2024-2026), enlightening that loneliness and social isolation increase by 25% the risk of early death. Social connection should be considered a global public health priority. This study analyzes the possible relationship between smoking and suicidal ideation, together with the personal feelings of loneliness and isolation in Italian people aged 18-40. Moreover, we tried to figure out the possible limits between the need for help and the actual request for it.

Material and Methods

The pilot research was conducted through a 15-question survey developed in Italian and shared online on September 24th, 2024. The survey included 4 socio-demographic questions and 11 questions about loneliness and suicidal ideation, as well as the propensity to ask for help in people aged 18-40. Three questions came from the validated "3-item UCLA Loneliness scale".

Results

These preliminary results show that 50 people answered the survey (64% female). 38% of the sample were smokers. 48% of the respondents had suicidal thoughts in their lifetime; particularly among smokers, the percentage increased to 52,6%. Of the 48% that reported having had suicidal thoughts, 6% answered having these kinds of thoughts very often, 14% sometimes, and 28% rarely. 60% said they felt alone among other people (very often 22%, sometimes 38%). 60% of the sample reported having reached a psychologist/psychiatrist, 32% only thought about doing it, and among them, the main reason not to contact mental health professionals was money shortage (31.2%).

Conclusions

Results show some level of relationship between smoking and low mood; however, considering the small size of the sample, the collected evidence is not generalizable. The answers allow us to reflect on the possible need for public health policymakers to improve smoking cessation treatments with psychological support. Further research is needed to deeply investigate the possible pathogenetic role of smoking on low mood development.

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How Slovenia banned flavors in e-cigarettes with the support of foreign NGOs (recognized by WHO in 2024)

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In March 2024, changes to the tobacco legislation were officially approved in Slovenia. These changes are in accordance with the Commission Delegated Directive (EU) 2022/2100. The most significant achievements of the amended legislation are the ban on all flavors (except the tobacco flavor) in e-cigarettes and heated tobacco products and the shortening of the transition period of the smoking rooms ban. Slovenian NGOs had an important role in achieving this success. Slovenian NGOs cooperated constructively in the public consultation, gave our suggestions, and supported the proposal for amendments. NGOs also worked with public health institutions to influence the decision-makers and convince the public to support health for all. In order to gain support from the Slovenian decision-makers, the Slovenian Coalition for Public Health, Environment, and Tobacco Control prepared several Letters of Support addressed to the decision-makers. We sent the letters to foreign NGOs in tobacco control, where we are active members (ENSP, EPHA, SFP). We asked them to forward the letters to their members and ask them to sign the letters and send them to the Slovenian decision-makers. This proved to be successful. A network of NGOs that help each other is extremely important in achieving change in any field. Slovenia's success in achieving changes to the tobacco legislation can serve as a model of good practice to other countries which have yet to achieve the same, and anyone who wants to achieve changes in their respective

field. We hope that the Slovenian model of good practice can help other countries to follow Slovenia's path. This successful story will also be featured in the upcoming WHO/Europe Country Impact Report, launched at the 74th Session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe between 29th and 31st October 2024.

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Awareness of electronic cigarettes-related health risks among adolescents

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Introduction

Electronic cigarettes (ECs) deliver nicotine without tobacco combustion by vaporizing liquids or heating specific sticks (Heat-not-burn Tobacco Products, HTP). The use of ECs is rising, particularly among young people, raising concerns about their potentially harmful health effects.

Material and Methods

We administered an anonymous online questionnaire to patients aged 12 to 18 years followed at our clinics due to respiratory and allergic morbidities. The questionnaire was divided into three sections: 1) knowledge about the risks of electronic smoking; 2) the AECQ questionnaire on expectations regarding ECs' use; and 3) the ECAS questionnaire on the attitudes towards ECs.

Results

Fifty-seven adolescents were recruited between October 2023 and June 2024 (mean age 14.1 years, 68% males). 80% acknowledged that ECs do not help with smoking cessation and that they can be as harmful as traditional cigarettes, whereas less than 25% were aware of the health risks of second-hand vaping. Additionally, 78% did not know third-hand smoke. Furthermore, 31% were unsure if vaping during pregnancy is risky for the fetus, and 52% were unaware that nicotine contained in ECs can cross the placenta. Regarding HTP, 40% were uncertain about the ability to induce addiction, and 60% were more generally unaware of their detrimental effects. At the same time, 80% recognized the importance of educating the youth population about the health risks of electronic smoking.

Conclusions

Our study highlights the alarming lack of awareness among adolescents about vaping-related health risks. Given the ever-growing relevance of electronic cigarettes as a worldwide health concern, urgent educational and preventive measures are of main interest, especially in the pediatric population.

Conflicts of interest

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Exposure to tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship (TAPS) among Polish schoolchildren: Findings from the global youth tobacco survey, Poland 1999-2022

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Introduction

The Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS) is a global CDC and WHO-coordinated survey that monitors schoolchildren's use of tobacco and new emerging products and their knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes toward tobacco, tobacco marketing, and tobacco control policies.

The aim was to assess the current exposure to TAPS among Polish schoolchildren and changes in the exposure in the past 25 years.

Material and Methods

GYTS includes a two-stage (school and classes) sample design where schools are proportionally selected to their enrollment size. GYTS is a cross-sectional, nationally representative, school-based self-administered questionnaire survey of schoolchildren aged 13 to 15. In Poland, GYTS sample sizes count from 3,000 to 4,000 respondents. Current data analysis on youth exposure to TAPS is based on national GYTS samples from 1999, 2003, 2016, and 2022.

Results

In 2022, 61.9% of Polish students saw anyone using tobacco on TV, on video, or movie, 29.9% noticed TAPS at points of sale, 8.6% had something with a tobacco brand logo, and 6.8% were ever offered a free tobacco product from a tobacco company representative. Exposure to TAPS among Polish children remains at the average European level. Between 1999 and 2022, the most substantial changes in exposure of schoolchildren to TAPS were noted in offering a free tobacco product by representatives of tobacco companies (decline from 49.8% to 6.8%) and in having a tobacco brand logo (28% to 8.6%), Since 2016, there was also observed a substantial decline in perception of TAPS in points of sale (43.3% in 2016 to 29.9% in 2022) and 10-percent points decline in perception of tobacco message or anyone using tobacco in media (respectively, from 71.9% to 61.9%).

Conclusions

Banning TAPS in Polish media, including the Internet, works. However, the level of exposure to TAPS among Polish schoolchildren seems to be still at a high level, especially when they see tobacco use on TV, videos, and movies and are exposed to TAPS at points of sale. It results from a tobacco industry strategy that is currently focused on Internet capacities and points of sale, for new emerging tobacco and nicotine products. There is an urgent need to counter-act the tobacco industry strategy and strengthen tobacco control measures in these settings.

Conflicts of interest

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The role of oral health professionals in tobacco use prevention and tobacco cessation

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The World Health Organization has advocated the integration of smoking prevention or cessation programs into routine oral health care since it brings extensive benefits to oral health. By tobacco cessation, patients are less prone to the progression of periodontal disease, have less future tooth loss, and have reduced risks of oral mucosal lesions and head and neck cancers. Evidence indicates that dentists are in a favorable position to deliver effective smoking prevention or cessation advice to improve patients' oral health. The Hellenic Dental Association (HDA), representing 12000 oral health care professionals, fully accepts its role in implementing the above-mentioned principles and, therefore, actively participates in the national and international tobacco prevention and cessation programs. The actions already taken are the following; "Train the trainer program". The program was developed in 2020 by the FDI (Federation Dentaire International) task force and aims to empower oral healthcare providers to implement tobacco cessation methods. One of the task force members, Dr E. Stoufi, PhD, adapted the program specifically for HDA. HDA successfully implemented two "train the trainer" workshops in collaboration with Athens and Thessaloniki in 2021. Since then, many local dental societies have successfully organized scientific sessions and public awareness events in collaboration with municipal authorities. Furthermore, a tobacco cessation course was incorporated into the curriculum of preventive dentistry at the National Dental School (EKPA). HDA plans to develop additional educational material targeting the prevention of the use of vaping and cannabinol products, especially in the adolescent population. Our aim is to encourage every oral health provider to participate in the tobacco use prevention and the tobacco cessation chain.

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Trends and gender differences 2019-2024 in use of alternative smoking products (excluding e-cigarettes) by teenagers in Ireland

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Background

In addition to existing alternative forms of tobacco and nicotine delivery (e.g., water/shisha pipes, snus), newer forms of tobacco and nicotine delivery (e.g., e-cigarettes, heated tobacco products, and oral nicotine products) emerged as a response to declines in cigarette smoking prevalence and the consolidation of the tobacco industry, with concern about uptake among younger populations, despite little available data.

Objectives

To examine trends between 2019 and 2024 in the use of water pipes, moist snuff (snus), heated tobacco products, and nicotine pouches in 16-year-olds in Ireland.

To examine gender differences in the use of these products.

Methods

ESPAD is the European School Survey Project on Alcohol and other Drugs. We use data from 2 Waves of ESPAD Ireland (2019, n=1,947; 2024, n=2,002).

In 2019, respondents were asked if they had ever used water pipe, moist snuff (snus), 'heat-not-burn' tobacco and, in 2024, water pipe (shisha), moist snuff (snus), heated tobacco products, and nicotine pouches, re-coded yes/no for lifetime use.

Results

Between 2019 and 2024, there was a decrease in lifetime use of water pipes (6%-3.8%) and an increase in heated tobacco products (3.2%-7.2%) and moist snuff (2.8%-10.7%). No data were collected on nicotine pouches in 2019; in 2024, prevalence was 8.1%. Male teenagers reported significantly higher prevalence for all products in both years, except for heated tobacco products in 2024, when female teenagers had slightly higher use. Moist snuff showed the greatest increase between 2019 and 2024, 3.5%-14.3% for males and 2.1%-6.3% for females. We note the consistently very high prevalence for all products reported by those who answered "Rather Not Say" to the question "What is your sex?" in 2024.

Conclusion

The use of alternative tobacco and nicotine products by teenagers in Ireland is high and increasing. As smoking prevalence declines, education and cessation interventions for these products are needed.

Conflicts of interest

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On cytisine's safety, efficacy and cost-effectiveness in smoking cessation: A brief summary of clinical and pharmacoeconomic study Results

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Background

Over 50% of tobacco users want to quit. Smoking cessation is beneficial both for preventing tobacco-attributable diseases and for making their treatment more effective. There is a variety of effective and scientifically proven smoking cessation aids. Cytisine, a partial nicotine agonist, is the oldest smoking cessation tool widely used mainly in countries of Central and Eastern Europe, but the interest in its use is currently on the rise also in Western Europe and other countries.

Objective

Review recent studies and briefly conclude on cytisine's safety, efficacy, and cost-effectiveness in smoking cessation.

Material and Methods

This is a brief narrative review of recent clinical and pharmacoeconomic studies, mainly their systematic and narrative reviews, meta-analyses,

and randomized clinical trials on cytisine as a smoking cessation aid. The publications were searched on PubMed, Medline, EMBASE, Cochrane Library, and Worldwide Science.

Results

The summary of clinical studies shows that cytisine may mostly contribute to increasing moderate gastrointestinal adverse events when compared to placebo and nicotine replacement therapy (NRT). In comparison with varenicline, cytisine-based treatment of nicotine addiction has fewer adverse effects. The efficacy of cytisine as a smoking cessation aid is well-documented in clinical trials. For the primary outcome and longer abstinence, cytisine is more efficient than placebo and NRT but has less efficacy than varenicline. When compared with other smoking cessation aids, the cost of a standard 25-day treatment of nicotine dependence by cytisine is a few times cheaper and significantly more cost-effective.

Conclusions

Cytisine is a safe, efficient, cheap, and cost-effective smoking cessation aid as compared with placebo and NRT. Although cytisine seems less clinically effective than varenicline, its use is much cheaper and more cost-effective than varenicline. However, there is an urgent need to design and conduct an international multi-center head-to-head double-blind clinical trial of cytisine and varenicline to evaluate the efficacy and cost-effectiveness of these two medicines sufficiently. Nevertheless, we currently have enough scientific evidence to recommend cytisine as an essential smoking cessation aid, incorporate it into guidelines for smoking cessation, use it in routine medical practice when treating nicotine addiction, and globally promote it, especially in developing countries and in lower social strata.

Conflicts of interest

The presentation was prepared with an independent grant paid by a Polish pharmaceutical company. The company also reimbursed the cost of participation at and travel to ENSP ECTC.

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Tobacco21 policy in Ireland

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Although tobacco smoking among adolescents and young adults continues to decline across Europe, smoking in these two important demographics remains a problem. European tobacco control policy needs to move forward with bolder measures to decrease adolescent and young adult smoking rates and protect a new generation from the dangers of tobacco smoking. Many countries are examining Tobacco Endgame policies, which aim to reduce smoking prevalence to minimal levels rapidly. One such policy is raising the tobacco age of sale to 21 years of age (commonly referred to as Tobacco 21). Tobacco companies have a long history of targeting adolescents and young adults with their products. Adolescent brains are uniquely vulnerable to the effects of nicotine and nicotine addiction. T21 aims to decrease the availability of tobacco products to adolescents and young adults. The policy has been introduced in nine countries worldwide, but no EU country has adopted a T21 policy to date. Where it has been implemented, the policy has led to a delay in initiating tobacco use and further denormalization of tobacco products. Ireland has just passed legislation this year to ban the sale of tobacco products to anyone under 21 years of age. This talk will provide an overview of the journey taken by tobacco control advocates and policymakers to reach this point. This talk will highlight the challenges of introducing such a policy in an Irish setting and discuss how other European countries could implement T21 in their jurisdiction.

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Smoke-free generation legislation in the United Kingdom

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The previous UK government had plans for legislation that would have made the buying of tobacco illegal for anyone born after 2009. This would have raised the tobacco smoking age by one year until it applied to the whole population. These plans were accompanied by consulting on measures to reduce the appeal of vaping to children as well as restricting e-cigarette availability. Although these plans were well supported across the political spectrum, they did not come to fruition due to a change in government. The incoming government has committed to taking similarly serious measures to reduce the harms of tobacco smoking and to reduce vaping among children. This has included media reports of extending smoke-free legislation to outdoor environments such as outdoor restaurant areas. Together, these new policies have the potential – if carefully designed – to move the UK to a smoke-free generation. This presentation will cover the advocacy and research efforts behind these plans and the evidence base for their impacts. It will consider what the UK can learn from international evidence and what aspects of the UK experience can be useful for other countries.

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New nicotine products, new risks: Navigating the challenges of novel products and poly-tobacco use in Europe's tobacco control policies

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As Europe moves towards the ambitious goal of a nicotine-free generation, the rise of novel nicotine and tobacco products, such as e-cigarettes, heated tobacco products, and nicotine pouches, presents challenges for policymakers. This talk will explore the complexities of dual and poly-tobacco use (PTU), where individuals simultaneously consume multiple tobacco and nicotine products. Drawing insights from the recently published

ERS statement on "harm reduction" and recent studies, this talk will address the following key issues: Efficacy and Risks of Novel Products: Examining whether these products serve as effective harm reduction tools or perpetuate nicotine addiction, especially through dual and PTU, which may carry additional health risks; Regulatory Challenges: Discussing the methodological and regulatory hurdles in defining and measuring PTU across different products, as well as the need for standardised approaches in research and policy; Youth and Addiction: Highlighting how the appeal of novel nicotine products is driving nicotine initiation among adolescents, increasing the risk of sustained addiction and traditional cigarette use later in life; Policy Implications for a Nicotine-Free Generation: Proposing tailored regulatory strategies that address the unique challenges of PTU, emphasising the need for stricter regulation of novel products, and considering their role in tobacco harm reduction versus complete cessation. This talk aims to provide evidence-based viewpoints for European policymakers on the evolving landscape of nicotine products to assist in shaping future policies that are effective in curbing nicotine use and protecting public health.

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Accelerating tobacco control in the EU: Legislative actions towards a tobacco-free generation by 2040

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Background
Tobacco use is a leading cause of respiratory diseases in Europe, alongside its significant contribution to cancer and cardiovascular conditions. Aligned with the European Commission's 2021 pledge to deliver a tobacco-free generation, European scientific, healthcare, and civil society organizations have renewed calls for action. A positive step is the recent release of the updated Council Recommendation on Smoke-Free Environments, which aims to protect citizens from exposure to secondhand smoke and emissions from novel tobacco and nicotine products. This recommendation includes an extended list of public places where smoking and the use of these products should be prohibited, which will be specifically beneficial for young people and children, enhancing their protection from harmful exposure.

Objectives
This presentation aims to provide an overview of relevant EU legislative files, their current status, and their importance in achieving a tobacco-free generation by 2040. It will also discuss how these legislative measures are crucial for tackling the burden of tobacco-related diseases across Europe. Furthermore, it will outline necessary steps at the EU and national levels to improve and strengthen regulations to protect public health.

Methods
The presentation will address key actions aimed at reaching the tobacco endgame, including (1) strengthening the implementation of the updated Council Recommendation on Smoke-Free Environments, (2) aligning taxation on new tobacco and nicotine products with traditional cigarettes, (3) banning flavors in tobacco and vaping products, (4) introducing an annual public monitoring mechanism for tobacco control, (5) revising key tobacco directives such as the Tobacco Products Directive, Tobacco Taxation Directive, and Tobacco Advertising Directive, and (6) exploring the introduction of Tobacco 21 policies, which would raise the legal age for purchasing tobacco products to 21 across the EU.

Results
The updated Council Recommendation on Smoke-Free Environments is a crucial step toward reducing exposure to harmful emissions from conventional and novel tobacco products. The pending revision of the Tobacco Products Directive and other frameworks is essential to addressing emerging products and aligning regulations with public health goals.

Conclusions
Building on the progress of the updated recommendations, future European Commission leadership must prioritize revising other key tobacco directives to meet the goal of a tobacco-free generation by 2040. These measures will support the European Beating Cancer Plan and protect public health across the EU.

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