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Review Article

Education on tobacco use interventions for undergraduate dental students



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Summary Inadequate training for dental professionals hampers the implementation of tobacco use interventions for the improvement of dental practice and oral and overall health. To improve dental education regarding tobacco use prevention and cessation (DENTUPAC), we examined literature addressing previous efforts and experiences with this goal. The majority of studies, published in the US and Europe, reported that a transition from didactic to clinical education achieved moderate-level interventions. The need for a comprehensive multidisciplinary approach and the low confidence of faculty members in their own ability to effectively teach DENTUPAC are commonly reported barriers to DENTUPAC in clinical settings. Objective structured clinical examinations of standardized patients and motivational interviewing have proven consistently successful in DENTUPAC and are included in faculty development workshops and internet-based training. However, levels of intervention from dentists on quitting smoking

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reported by their patients were relatively low compared to those from physicians, although most dentists reported that they counsel patients. In addition to previous efforts and experiences in developing and disseminating DENTUPAC, the optimization of DENTUPAC by evaluating education on health behavior interventions may help increase the involvement of dentists in cessation counseling upon graduation.

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1. Introduction

Tobacco use and exposure to tobacco smoke harms oral and overall health and affects the outcomes of dental treatment, while cessation of tobacco use reduces and often reverses these deleterious effects. Dental professionals are in a unique position to encourage tobacco use cessation, as they routinely encounter smokers and can alert them to their symptoms at an early time point. However, few take full advantage of this opportunity due to lack of training. Emphasis is therefore being placed on dental education regarding tobacco use prevention and cessation (DENTUPAC) [1,2].

Global efforts to control tobacco use have increased with the introduction of the World Health Organization (WHO) Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. This framework recommends measures to improve education, communication, and training to raise public awareness, promote the cessation of tobacco use, and provide adequate treatment for tobacco dependence [3]. We would therefore like to propose measures to further improve efforts to educate dental professionals-in-training on ways to encourage cessation among their tobacco-using patients.

In Japan, the smoking rate of 32.2% reported among adult males in 2013 is high compared to other developed countries. In addition, the increased proportion of adult females who smoke (10.5% in Japan) is an important issue globally. For the first time in Japan, a numerical goal of a 12.2% smoking rate for both males and females by 2022

was included in the second term of the Health Promotion Act to promote tobacco cessation on a national scale. In Japan, where smokeless tobacco has only recently begun to be used on any scale, tobacco use interventions were first described in the clinical competency guidelines for dental and dental hygiene students and in the standards of the National Board Dental and Dental Hygiene Examinations. Here, to identify recommendations to improve DENTUPAC in Japan and other countries, we analyzed previous reports from the viewpoints of good dental practice and public health.

2. Review process

Literature was selected from the reference list of our previous review [2]. Electronic searches were conducted using MEDLINE (January 1966–August 2012) for reports published in English. A standardized search strategy (not shown) was applied to databases. The reference lists of articles read in full were also considered, and search results were stored in literature management software (iPubMedMaker 7, Sapporo, Japan) for initial screening based on titles and abstracts. After excluding studies that addressed the relationship between tobacco and oral health, a total of 754 papers published in English were extracted. The titles and abstracts were read, with 366 papers ultimately selected for

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