Subject: FWP2000-2001 - SI2.316638 (2001CVG2-001) : Executive Summary

Development of Tobacco Control Training Programs for European Dentists Based on Analysis of their Tobacco Control Attitudes and Practices.

The project is a part of the ENSP Framework project 2000.

Scientific report

Introduction

First signs of tobacco use are clearly visible in the mouth of a smoker. Therefore, dentist is in a key position to diagnose and advise a new smoker.

In Europe and Scandinavia about 85 % of the population visit their dental team, at least, every second year. Therefore, the dental services can be a useful arena for tobacco prevention. In The EU Working Group On Tobacco and Oral Health survey reported in Dublin in May 1999, European dentist, and as many as 68% of Swedish dentists and 73 % of Finnish dentists stated that tobacco cessation is their duty. Smoking cessation is one of the most powerful methods of gaining health and also one of the most cost effective. It has also been stated that smoking cessation among current smokers will be the way of saving lives among smokers for the next three decades, depending of the long delay from onset to mortal illness.

Today smoking cessation is a professional treatment based on evidence and research. In several studies among dental professionals, it has been reported that lack of experience and education are obstacles to offer smoking cessation to their patients.
In all Europe, dental professionals have, by experience, demanded education programs and manuals in their home language.

Activity report

The work of the first period of our program started de facto in the summer 2000 as the contract with EU commission and financing was delayed. By the efforts of Ms Fleitmann of the ENSP, the period could fortunately be extended by three more months; until December 15th 2000. This made the completion of our work possible.

In the first year of the project, the interview was analyzed and published in Finland, Greece and Sweden. Numerous articles about the interview, as well as, on smoking and smoking cessation were published in scientific and other journals in Finland, Greece and Sweden. Health education materials as hand-outs to patients, slide-series and transparencies to educators were developed and distributed to the oral health personnel in all three countries. The main target, however, was developing a comprehensive manual for oral health personnel to be used and distributed in educational seminars.

Period September 15th 2000 - September 14th 2001

The second year of the project suffered again by delayed contract finances. However, this time, almost concomitantly with arrival of the finances, the partners were shocked by the information about ENSP amendment to shorten the working period till September 15th 2001. Thus, the active working period for the project was practically only three months of summer 2001. This hit, especially, hard the partners from Finland and Greece whose University administrative offices were, in effect, closed for summer holidays almost throughout the whole period.

The second year of the project aimed to fulfil the following objectives: Finalizing the manuals and organizing seminars to test the manuals and the educational program.

Printing the manuals and testing them in seminars was extremely difficult to organize in this narrow time-window. It had not been possible to organize the seminars in the absence of
finances. When the financing was clear, it was too late to publish advertisements to reach either the oral health personnel, or the teachers due to already organized summer holidays.

However, after spending extensive time on the telephone and by giving up their holidays, the group was successful in both, finalizing the manuals and organizing the seminars.

The manuals were highly appreciated, and the seminars were extremely successful. The Finnish manual has been widely distributed both, within and outside Finland. There is a demand to translate the manual into English in order to make it further available. It is proposed that the manual be translated, to be used in China, India, Mongolia and Kenya.
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