
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**

**Period September 15th 1999 - September 15th 2000.**

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.

**Partner reports**

**Finland**

*Personnel working for the project in 2001*

Anja Ainamo, DDS, PhD, MDS, professor, coordinator  
Aira Lahtinen, DDS, MDS, manager  
Jukka Talari, graphic artist  
Shilpi Ajwani, DDS, researcher, secretary  
Janne Ainamo, computer specialist  
Karin Iivonen, RN, lecturer  
Hannu Wallinheimo, MD, medical consultant

*Publications*


The manual was launched at the Annual Dental Convention 2001 in Helsinki, Finland, where 1000 copies were distributed to dentists and oral hygienists.


Based on the EU interview study on tobacco counseling activities among dentists, a similar study has been conducted among Indian dentists in Bangalore, India, and the results were presented in IADR Annual meeting in Tokyo; 28.6.2001.

Hiremath, Ajwani, Arora, Ainamo: Knowledge, attitudes & barriers in tobacco counseling among dentists in Bangalore, India *Journal of Dental Research*, Special Issue. 2001


**Seminars**

Seminars were given on September 11th and 12th, and on October 3rd to, altogether, 400 oral health workers. The purpose was to test the teaching program and materials, including the manual. Three-hour seminars included lectures by Karin Ïivonen on smoking behavior, addiction as a disease, and methods to influence young and adults, by Dr. Aira Lahtinen on oral effects of tobacco, and ways by which oral health personnel can influence, and how to use nicotine replacement therapy, by consultants of Pharmacia.

Pre-seminar and post-seminar interviews were conducted for evaluation. According to the questionnaires, 73 % of dentists and 52 % of oral hygienists claimed that the seminar will definitely change their clinical work; they will be more active and had learnt various skills to discuss tobacco use. Majority of the participants wanted more education on tobacco issues later; either seminars or discussions at the workplace. Of dentists and oral hygienists, 85 % ranked the seminar, in five level scale, as 4-5 (good to excellent), and 15 % as 3-4 (average to good).

On March 22nd 2001, Dr. Aira Lahtinen, in a meeting of the local Finnish Dental Society, gave a lecture to 80 dentists in Lappeenranta, Finland, on tobacco counseling, and presented the material produced so far.

On December 11th 2001, a seminar will be given at the Institute of Dentistry, University of Helsinki, to teachers, dental students and oral hygienist students. Teachers from other universities and schools have also been invited.

**Other activities**

On August 2-5, 2001, a brainstorming seminar was organized by the Finnish Working Group (Ainamo, Lahtinen, Ajwani, Talari, Ainamo) in Luhanka, Finland, in order to finalize the Manual. The objective was successfully met.
On 24.4.2001, the material produced so far was presented by Dr. Aira Lahtinen to Finnish National Health Authorities.

The Finnish Dental Association participated in Quit and Win competition in 2001 and 2002, informing and distributing materials. Next year, more articles will be distributed for the press.

Professor Anja Ainamo and Dr. Aira Lahtinen are members of the working committee of ENSP in Finland.

Professor Anja Ainamo is a member of the Program Committee for the 3rd International Conference on Smokeless Tobacco, Sept 22-25, 2002 Stockholm, Sweden.

Professor Anja Ainamo and Dr. Aira Lahtinen are members of the program committee for World Congress on Tobacco or Health in Helsinki, 3-8.8.2003.

Dr. Aira Lahtinen is a member of the Governmental Tobacco Control Working Group of the South District of Finland.

On August 2nd 2001, Dr. Aira Lahtinen gave a talk on harmful effects of snuff on Finnish National Television.

On November 30th 2001, the manual *How to help the smoker to quit* was presented in a press conference by the Finnish Dental Association.

**As large body of educational material is now available, Dr. Aira Lahtinen will, through Finnish Dental Association, inform all the health educational institutions of Finland about the availability of the new teaching materials.**

Contacts have already been made with the Institutes of Dentistry in Oulu and Turku, and School for Oral Hygienists in Helsinki, Oulu, Turku and Kuopio. In future, tobacco counseling education will be implemented in students' curriculum in all these institutions. All remaining institutions, educating other oral health professionals in Finland, will be contacted later on.

Contact has been made with the National Health Institute, the Finnish Medical Association, and the Association of Health Center Nurses in order to include tobacco counseling in curriculum of all the health professionals.

Contact has been made with the Finnish Lung Association (Dr. Ulla Veteläsuu) and negotiations are on to arrange common seminars for general and oral health professionals in different parts of Finland. First seminar will be given in Kuopio University Hospital, on May 5th 2002.

Contact has been made with the Ministry of Social and Health Affairs of Finland by presenting the education project.
**Materials**

The Finnish Dental Association has printed and mailed, free of cost, 450 sets of 19 transparencies about smokeless tobacco in Finnish, and 50 sets in Swedish, to health centers and voluntary health associations in Finland.

Posters against smokeless tobacco in Finnish and Swedish have been distributed by the Finnish Dental Association to health centers and dental clinics, and by oral health personnel to schools and sports clubs.

Leaflets for patients in the dental offices have been printed in Finnish and Swedish, and are distributed by the Finnish Dental Association.

*Internet* [www.hammasli.fi](http://www.hammasli.fi)

CD-rom has been prepared containing clinical pictures and illustrations of the manual to be sent to co-workers and to the press for free publication of the pictures. The pictures will also be available on the internet through one of the links of the Finnish Dental Association web page.

Transparencies and leaflets about smokeless tobacco, tables, and questionnaires of the manual are freely available on the Internet.

Articles on tobacco, published in the *Finnish Dental Journal*, are available on the Internet and are frequently visited by our coworkers and the press.

**Annexes**

1. The Manual *How to help the smokers to quit*
2. The *Finnish Dental Journal* with three articles.
3. Articles in other journals.
4. Seminar program.
5. Smokeless tobacco: paper copies of transparencies, leaflets, posters.
6. Copies of posters presented in international scientific meetings.
Partner reports

Greece

Scientific report

Person in charge: Dr. Argyro Polychronopoulou, DDS, SM, SD

List of actions/activities undertaken in Greece in order of occurrence:

- **A survey** was conducted in collaboration with the EU Working Group on Tobacco and Oral Health in order to investigate training needs. The questionnaire was distributed during the 18th Greek Dental Association meeting and two hundred forty five licensed dentists of Greek nationality completed and returned the questionnaire. The questionnaire assessed Greek dentists’ tobacco practices, cessation efforts, prevention training and attitudes concerning tobacco control programs (Annex 1).

- Dr. Polychronopoulou performed **statistical analysis of the Greek survey data**. Apart from descriptive statistics, the possible association of smoking status and beliefs and attitudes on smoking prevention practices was examined. The need for such an analysis derived from the fact that almost half of Greek dentist were current / previous smokers. It was thus considered that dentists’ own smoking habits could influence their behavior towards smoking prevention.

- Dr. Polychronopoulou in collaboration with Dr. Athanassouli, Professor of Preventive and Community Dentistry-Athens University, as well as Drs. Angelopoulos, and Papanikolaou, Professor of Oral Surgery and Professor of Stomatology respectively (EU Working Group members), prepared and completed the **article on Greek dentists’ attitudes toward tobacco cessation practices**. The article was accepted for
publication in the Greek Dental Society official journal, namely Stomatological Chronicles, and will appear in volume 45(1), 2001 (Annex 2).

- After the completion of the training needs assessment phase, it was also considered necessary to publish a literature review on tobacco effects in the mouth targeting the Greek dental professional. Dr. Polychronopoulou in collaboration with Dr. Athanassouli and the EU Working Group prepared and completed a **review article on tobacco oral health effects** in Greek language. The article was published in the Greek Dental Research Society Journal, namely Odostomatological Proodos 2001, 55(1): 14-26 (Annex 3).

- The Greek participating team proceeded with the preparation of a comprehensive manual for tobacco cessation with detailed guidelines specifically designed for oral health professionals. Thus, a **sixty-four-page** length detailed draft **manual for dentists** was prepared. The manual, partly based in the British Medical Association publication “Helping patients to stop smoking”, was enhanced by material and data adapted to the needs of Greek dentists (Annex 4-revised/final version).

- Apart from the manual, the enhancement of the training material package with slide series was decided. An **eighty-one-slides education package** was formed and completed to accompany the dentists’ manual (Annex 5/final version).

- The training package for the Greek dentist, as presented above, consisted of the two mentioned articles, the manual and the manual accompanying slide series. Drs. Polychronopoulou and Athanassouli decided, although not included in the initial application and in order to better serve the project scope, to prepare extensive series of slides for the training sessions to be used by the dentist trainer (train the trainer slide series). **A series of 140 train the trainer slides** was prepared according to the structure of the seminars planned for dentists (Annex 6/final version).
Simultaneously, the **five-section seminar structure was developed.** The Greek team, after consulting extensively with council members of the Greek Dental Association and experts on seminar development, concluded that the training sessions would consist of the following parts: a. introduction-background epidemiological information: the tobacco problem and effects in the oral cavity, b. first dental office visit: how to help the dental patient that uses tobacco, c. follow up dental office visits: how to help the dental patient that uses tobacco, d. how to prepare the dental office e. specialty issues of interest.

Although not initially planned, the Greek team organized **two meetings with members of the Dental Academic Community for extensive evaluation of the prepared training material.** Apart from Drs. Polychronopoulou and Athanassouli, five academic persons faculty members of Athens University i.e. Dr. L. Papagiannouli-Professor of Pediatric Dentistry, Dr. L Chomata-Associate Professor of Preventive and Community Dentistry, Dr. C. Kounari-Associate Professor of Preventive and Community Dentistry, Dr. C. Panagopoulos-Assistant Professor of Preventive Dentistry and Dr. K. Kavvadia-Lecturer of Pediatric Dentistry, contributed their expertise by participating in extensive review and evaluation of the material. During the first meeting, the detailed material under evaluation (manual, accompanying slide series, train the trainer slide series) was presented and exploratory questions were answered. At the end of the first meeting, participants were provided the full material package (manual, accompanying slide series, train the trainer slide series plus articles under publication) for one-week evaluation and during the second meeting detailed discussion and participants’ indicated revisions were incorporated in the training material. Thus, the final version of a comprehensive manual readily available to oral health professionals with guidelines on how to help their patients stop
tobacco use was formed. The revised manual along with the revised accompanying slide series and the train the trainer slide series are presented in Annexes 4-5-6.

- The revised manual has been given for production and 5,000 copies of the manual are expected. The manuals will be distributed to the dentists of the Greater Athens area as well as to the dental students of Athens University.

- A copy of the manual and the accompanying slide series will be mailed to the 52 State Dental Associations in Greece.

- A pilot training seminar targeting private dentists for material evaluation is planned and will take place at the Athens University. Thirty-five private dentists, who received their dental training within the last decade and are practicing in the Athens area, have already signed and will participate in the seminar. The participants will contribute voluntarily with no reimbursement due to time limitation imposed by the program deadline. The seminar will be conducted with the use of the 140 train the trainer slide series and will cover fields presented by the manual. The seminar will be structured as presented above, and special emphasis will be given on cessation techniques.

- Furthermore, a questionnaire has been developed for seminar evaluation and feedback (Annex 7). The questionnaire assesses effectiveness of the training program and provides critiques of participating dentists in terms of material format, length, and feasibility. Extensive revision of the 35 answered questionnaires will take place at the end of the seminar in order to further improve the training program.

- The Greek participating team, in order to fully accomplish the project intention, encountering the fact that smoking is highly prevalent among Greek health professionals compared to other European countries, decided to explore dental students’ attitudes on smoking prevention. It was considered that dental students as
future dentists should be a group of primary target in an effort to train oral health professionals on controlling patients’ smoking habits. A questionnaire was developed by Dr. Polychronopoulou to assess the Athens University Dental School students’ knowledge on tobacco oral effects as well as the students’ attitudes and willingness towards patient engagement in tobacco cessation programs (Annex 8).

- The students’ study was conducted to one hundred sixty six students of the University of Athens Dental School. Dr. Polychronopoulou completed data input and data analysis. The article on Greek dental students’ attitudes towards tobacco use prevention has been submitted for publication (Annex 9).

- A multimedia presentation (interactive cd-rom) based on the above educational slides series has been prepared by the Greek participation team to accompany the developed manual and will be distributed upon request (Annex 10).

- Construction of an easily approachable web page has started. The page will be accessible through the site of the Athens University Dental School with information for dentists on how to help patients quit smoking.

- A book chapter titled ‘Tobacco prevention and the dentist’ is under preparation by Dr. Polychronopoulou. The chapter will be included in the book ‘Preventive and Community Dentistry’, authored by Dr. Athanassouli that will be published within the next year.

- Dr. Polychronopoulou, as invited speaker by the Greek Society for Dental Research, will give a detailed presentation of the data derived from dentists’ study under the title ‘The contemporary dentist against the habit of smoking’ to the members of the Society, April 2002.

- Dr. Athanassouli, as the chairperson of the 6th Annual Conference of the European Association of Dental Public Health, 13-14 September 2002, and Dr.
Polychronopoulou as member of the organizing committee will hold a session on tobacco control practices by dentists during the meeting. In addition the results of the Greek students data will be presented during the scientific session.

➢ Material is under preparation for enhancing the Preventive Dentistry course given to the fourth year dental students at Athens University. It should be noted that no lecture on tobacco prevention has been included up to now in the Dental School curriculum. Dr. Polychronopoulou will be responsible for the lectures on tobacco prevention, and curriculum modification to include the new material will take place starting the next academic year.

Further efforts are under planning in order to disseminate to the scientific community the results of the conducted studies, as well as further distribute the total training package to the interested professionals throughout the country.
List of Annexes

Annex 1: Questionnaire assessing Greek dentists’ tobacco practices, cessation efforts, prevention training and attitudes concerning tobacco control programs


Annex 7: Questionnaire assessing training session and training material effectiveness

Annex 8: Questionnaire assessing Greek dental students’ beliefs and attitudes concerning tobacco control programs

Partner reports

Sweden

Following persons have been involved in the project

Refinement of the manual for dental professionals:

- Susanna Axelsson DDS, PhD  
  - SBU
- Susanna Allgurin Neikter. Marketing manager  
  - SBU
- Åsa Svensson. Project Assistant  
  - SBU
- Lennart Edqvist Medical journalist

Reviewer

- Jan Bergström Professor  
  - Karolinska Institutet
- Birgitta Flodéus PhD  
  - Karolinska Institutet

Three days seminar planning and accomplishment:

- Seppo Wickholm DDS, Senior consultant  
  - CTP
- Hans Gilljam MD, PhD  
  - CTP
- Inger Nordström Torpenberg, RN, MPH  
  - CTP
- Åsa Forsgårdh, RDH  
  - CTP
- Gunilla Kornelind, Secretary  
  - CTP
- Birgit Vehmas, Secretary  
  - CTP

The draft manual needed refinement to be a complete product which would have strong health promotion impact on the readers. To attain this the production team was reinforced by expertise in different fields like lay-out, design, peer review etc. A new collaboration partner was recognized in The Swedish Council on Technology Assessment in Health Care (SBU). An agency which could offer the qualifications we needed to fulfill this special objective. So far the result of the work is a dummy which is ready to go in press. The dummy will be attached to this final report. With the Europe against Cancer program, ENSP, SBU and Centre for Tobacco Prevention as senders, it is assumed that the manual will be favorably received by the dental professionals in Sweden. The manual was planned to be finished before the expiring date of the project but the delay of payments by the commission made it impossible. The manual will be launched at a meeting planned in April 2002. Costs for printing and distribution will be financed by other sources than the commission.
One of the most obvious impediments for the dental professionals not to work with smoking cessation is lack of education. In Sweden the public dental services has been working with tobacco cessation for some time. The private sector dentistry which is serving most of the adult patients, in Stockholm about 80 %, is just in the very beginning. Therefor we aimed the private sector when we planned the pilot seminars on tobacco cessation. In September in the very last minute of the project we succeeded to have a 3 days seminar with participants from the private sector.

*Description of education program in smoking cessation*

The education program consisted of seminars, accomplished during 3 days, in total 14 hours of lectures. The aim was to make it possible for the participants to carry trough smoking cessation appointments chair side or in class. The topics were as follows:

Seminar day 1:

- Introduction
- Tobacco in a global perspective
- Tobacco and general health
- Nicotine dependence, withdrawal symptoms and weight increase
- Dental office policy and tobacco
- Smoking and periodontal disease
- Smoking and dental implants
- Smoking and oral cancer

Seminar day 2:

- The role of dentistry in smoking cessation
- Smoking cessation
- How to do, how to motivate
- Basis of judgement
- Medical treatment
- Training
Seminar day 3:

Oral snuff use, health effects and cessation
Smoking cessation in dentistry
The Quit line
The Health line
DrSmokeFree- applications in dentistry
Handouts
The management of smoking cessation individually or in class

There were 24 participants in the seminars and they also answered a questionnaire. Every part was separately judged in a four level scale and a general opinion in a ten step scale.

Results:

68 % Excellent
28 % Good
0 % Less good
0 % Bad
4 % Not answered

The result of the 10 step general judgment all participants scored >8.

Free remarks were for example:

The participants wanted a follow up day and generally more time for the seminars.

**Summary and conclusions**

In general the project has made it possible to create a well working network among professionals devoted to act against the threat to oral health from tobacco use. The network and the persons involved will continue this important mission even after the project is closed and finished.
The second year of the project consisted of refinement of the manual and seminars for the dental profession. The project has served as an excellent platform to create and start up activities in the field of smoking cessation in dentistry in the countries involved. The awareness of smoking as a cause of impaired oral health has increased among dental professionals. Finally, directly or indirectly, the project has served as a catalyst to activate dental professional organizations, the dental education and organizations on public and governmental level.

Annex:

1. Tobak & Tänder- en handledning för tandvårdspersonal (Tobacco & Teeth- a manual for the dental profession )

2. Fimpa privat- för bra resultat (Program for seminars in smoking cessation)
   - First announcement
   - Second announcement
   - Seminar schedule

Conclusions

It is extremely unfortunate that the financing for the project was cut by the ENSP at a time when two years of thorough basic work had just been completed and the dissemination at the European level was to begin.

Naturally, the three nations involved have benefited from the project by producing systematic and well-organised tobacco prevention programs for their oral health personnel. However, we believe that these national programs, that have been highly appreciated and well received in the participating nations, and in USA, would have had European value as well, had the project not been untimely shortened.
This report was produced by a contractor for Health & Consumer Protection Directorate General and represents the views of the contractor or author. These views have not been adopted or in any way approved by the Commission and do not necessarily represent the view of the Commission or the Directorate General for Health and Consumer Protection. The European Commission does not guarantee the accuracy of the data included in this study, nor does it accept responsibility for any use made thereof.