

### S14 - Promoting Smoking Cessation for Female Smokers in Hong Kong through Training Female Youth Smoking Cessation and Reduction Ambassadors

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**Introduction and Project Objectives:** There has been a growing concern over an increased number of female smokers worldwide. Given the fact that female smokers are less willing than male smokers to seek help from smoking cessation services, this project aimed to bridge the gap in existing literature by describing how their utilization of smoking cessation services could be enhanced through training up female youth to deliver a brief intervention using the AWARD (Ask, Warn, Advise, Refer and Do-it-again) model.

**Methods/Implementation:** A coalition with Hong Kong Girl Guides Association was formed. In the first phase of the project, five thousand leaflets on woman smoking cessation were distributed. In the second phase, we trained up 160 Girl Guides who were aged 13-25 years from the Association as well as from other sources to serve as smoking cessation and reduction ambassadors (SCRAs). In the third phase, 50 out of 160 SCRAs delivered a brief intervention based on the AWARD model to at least 2 female smokers in their social circles. To evaluate the effectiveness of the brief intervention, a one-group pre-test and repeated post-test, within subjects design was used. Data collection was conducted at baseline, and 1, 3 and 6 months.

**Results/Outcomes:** In all, 106 female smokers received the brief intervention. At 6-month follow-up, the self-reported abstinence was 12.2%; the biochemically verified prevalence of quitting was 5.7%. Approximately 7% of participants were motivated to use smoking cessation services between baseline and 6 months.

**Discussion and Conclusions:** To our knowledge, this was the first project to develop a community-based network to promote smoking cessation for female smokers in Hong Kong by training SCRAs. The results of the present study provide support for the effectiveness and feasibility of using this strategy in promoting smoking cessation for female smokers in Hong Kong. However, a more proactive approach is recommended to enhance the use of smoking cessation services by female smokers. Notably, to overcome the barrier of self-initiation, future practice could consider passing on information about smokers (mainly contact details) to smoking cessation providers could then call the smokers to arrange for more comprehensive interventions. There is some evidence that such a method is effective in enhancing smokers' utilization of cessation services. Additionally, the possibility of using mobile technology to deliver text messages about cessation to support female smokers should also be explored in future research and practice.

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