



Effectiveness of a health system-wide dissemination strategy in increasing clinician provision of NRT to smokers in a rural hospital



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Background

The systematic provision of nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) to hospital inpatients is important for the management of patient nicotine withdrawal during the hospital stay, and to encourage patient smoking cessation. The aim of the study was to assess the effectiveness of a dissemination strategy delivered on a health service-wide basis in increasing the routine provision of NRT to nicotine dependent inpatients by clinicians in one rural hospital. The study also aimed to identify patient and clinical characteristics associated with NRT provision.

Methods

The study employed a pre-post study design. Baseline data were collected from nicotine dependent inpatient medical records 12 months prior, and 12 months following the implementation of the dissemination strategy. Dissemination strategies included: executive support; executive endorsement of initiatives to encourage NRT provision; multiple methods of communication; staff consensus processes; enabling systems and prompts for clinicians; staff training; telephone support for clinical managers; and ward staff performance monitoring and feedback.

Results

In total, data from 397 medical records were utilised in this study. A significant increase from baseline was found for offer (24% to 73%) and provision (16% to 37%) of NRT following the dissemination strategy. No patient or clinical characteristics were found to be associated with NRT offer or provision.

Conclusion

Significant gains can be made in the provision of NRT care to inpatients through the implementation of a health system-wide dissemination strategy. Evaluation of the effect of the dissemination strategy across other hospitals, smoking care elements and other areas of clinical practice change is required.

For the full report on this project visit our website, follow the link to the Rural Research Capacity Building Program and click on 'view completed projects'

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