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Smoking Cessation and Drug Treatment: Identifying Gaps

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Background

In Canada, mortality and morbidity due to tobacco-related disease is greater than that related to illicit drug use, suggesting an increased risk for morbidity and mortality among individuals engaged in both behaviours.

Successful smoking cessation outcomes among individuals with concurrent substance use disorders have been documented. Individuals with opioid dependence (i.e., heroin and pain medications such as oxycodone, hydrocodone, fentanyl) are often referred to methadone maintenance programs for treatment.

It is estimated that more than 90% of individuals who are on methadone maintenance con-currently use tobacco.

The purpose of this study was to review the existing literature for smoking cessation interventions among individuals in methadone maintenance treatment programs and to describe:

- (A) Intervention components, mental health and drug use co-morbidities
- (B) Outcomes related to smoking cessation/reduction, drug use behaviour, and sex and gender differences.

Methods

- A comprehensive search of the COCHRANE Library, The Medscape Media (EMBASE), Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC), Medical Literature Analysis and Retrieval System Online (MEDLINE), PsychINFO and System for Information on Grey Literature in Europe (SIGLE) databases was conducted.
- Key words and MEsh terms included: Smok* AND cessation AND drug treatment; Tobacco/smok* AND drug treatment AND cessation/bull; Drug treatment AND smoking cessation intervention; Substance use AND smok* AND cessation AND program/intervention; Smok* AND cessation AND (alcohol, heroin, cocaine/crack cocaine, marijuana/ampheta/m/meth maintenance); Smok* AND drug treatment intervention (cognitive behavioral therapy, health promotion, health education, brief interventions, motivational interview)*)
- "The search was limited" to:
  - (A) Studies that assessed interventions addressing smoking cessation among individuals in methadone maintenance treatment
  - (B) In the English language
  - (C) Were published before June 2008 (References in the authors’ personal files also were examined for potentially relevant articles)
- Of 583 studies that were obtained from our search of databases, 8 publications met our inclusion criteria.

Table 1. Sample Characteristics & Intervention Components

Table 2. Results

Conclusions

The review indicates that there are no interventions that have sustained effects of smoking cessation (i.e., at 6-12 month follow-up) among individuals in methadone maintenance.

However, studies do indicate that interventions can reduce amount of smoking.

Interventions are associated with positive outcomes in drug use behaviour.

Few studies assess gender differences and findings are inconsistent.

Although studies describe other substance use and mental health diagnosis, these are not incorporated as part of smoking cessation treatment.

Future interventions studies are needed to address smoking cessation/reduction among individuals in methadone maintenance and concurrent substance use, mental health issues, and sex differences may be important components to be included in such interventions.