Improving Awareness Among Staff About Smoking Cessation Strategies and Promoting Parental Smoking Cessation Referrals in a Paediatric Department

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Aim: Increase referral rates of parents to the stop smoking cessation services [SSS].

Methods: Parental Referrals to SSS from our Paediatric Department [PD] covering 3 hospitals A, B and C in 2016 was zero. A questionnaire was devised with the SSS to assess barriers to referral and distributed across the PD. 57 responses were analysed [doctors, nurses & HCAs]: 35% were aware of SSS; 20% of referral pathway; only 7% had made SSS referral; 82% expressed interest in smoking cessation training; and >50% were unaware of the success of SSS. Qualitative feedback revealed staff had no training in smoking cessation; no knowledge of referral pathway; were concerned about stress caused by discussing smoking with parents especially in the neonatal unit.

Using the data from the questionnaire a series of interventions were devised:

1] Seminars promoting national smoking cessation online learning tools; posters highlighting referral pathway; smoking cessation referral form; email update on referrals

2] Lanyard cards highlighting pathway & Brief Verbal Advice.

Intervention 1] was implemented on all sites and 2] on site A&B site only between January & February 2017:

Results: Parental referrals to SSS from Paediatric Department between Oct 2016-April 2017 increased significantly from 0 to 56 referrals. There was a significant difference in referral rates between the hospitals: site A 30 referrals; B 23 referrals; & C 3 referrals.

Site C had lowest number of referrals and was the only site not to receive the Lanyard cards.

Conclusions: This study emphasizes a need to increase staff awareness and knowledge of smoking cessation. Lanyard cards with simple reminders of SSS available at patient encounters seem to have a role in empowering staff to discuss smoking cessation with parents and refer to SSS.