

Title of Intervention: A Smoking Cessation Intervention Using a Buddy System

Intervention Strategies: Supportive Relationships

Purpose of the Intervention: To improve success at giving up smoking in general practice

Population: Adult smokers

Setting: General practice smokers' clinic in Southeast London; health care facility-based

Partners: None mentioned

Intervention Description:

- Supportive Relationships: A buddy system was set up with adult smoking pairs. The first session of the buddy system started with the buddy pairs being introduced to each other while waiting to be seen together by the nurse at the first session. It was proposed that they voluntarily hand in an amount of money that would be given to charity if either they or their partner failed to last a week of abstinence. They were invited to phone or otherwise contact each other at least once a day over the next week and at any time that they needed support. They were scheduled to attend all further sessions together. During the first session, the nurses discussed the advantages and disadvantages of nicotine replacement therapy and the smoker's level of dependence. When patients returned to the nurse for follow-up they were given nicotine patch prescriptions if they requested them. They were given a set of guidelines on maintaining abstinence and the importance of not smoking. Patients were invited to return on later days for further advice, support and prescriptions.

Theory: Not mentioned

Resources Required:

- Staff/Volunteers: Nurses
- Training: System training for nurses
- Technology: Not mentioned
- Space: Not mentioned
- Budget: Not mentioned
- Intervention: Nicotine replacement prescriptions, access to phones
- Evaluation: Carbon monoxide breath measurer, questionnaire

Evaluation:

- Design: Randomized controlled trial
- Methods and Measures:
 - Breath tests measured carbon monoxide levels.
 - The Fagerstrom Test for Nicotine Dependence assessed information on smoking history and previous attempts to stop smoking.

Outcomes:

- Short Term Impact: Not measured
- Long Term Impact: A greater number of participants in the buddy condition were abstinent one week after the quit date and at the end of treatment.

Maintenance: Not mentioned

Lessons Learned: The procedure was very well accepted, easy to implement and no problems arose from pairing strangers.

Citation(s):

West, R., M. Edwards, et al. (1998). "A randomized controlled trial of a "buddy" systems to improve success at giving up smoking in general practice." *Addiction* 93(7): 1007-11.