

Poster presentation

Nicotine addiction among physicians in Greece

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Background

Physicians are highly respected in their communities acting as role models in issues related to health, and people turn to them for advice and consultation. For this reason, they are very important in advancing any tobacco control policies. According to a recent study overall, 38.6% of the Greek physicians (40% of men; 37% of women) currently smoke. Our pilot study tries to establish an estimate of the prevalence of nicotine dependence among smoking physicians as well as other health professionals in Greece.

Materials and methods

Anonymous standardized questionnaires including Fagerstrom Test for Nicotine Dependence (FTND) consisted of 6 items, were distributed to 75 practicing physicians (all smokers) in three cities in South-western Greece. In addition, there were other questions regarding demographic characteristics and awareness of the dangers of smoking. Doctors were visited at their working places (hospitals, private clinics, teaching hospitals) during one month period in 2007.

Results

Of those who reported smoking as “just a habit”, 30,7 % (23 of 75) scored > 6 on the FTND subscale. Scores FTND>6 indicate “Nicotine Dependence”. There were significant differences on demographic subscales between those presenting with or without nicotine addiction (i.e age, years of smoking and family conditions).

Conclusions

An extrapolation of our results to encompass all physicians in Greece would be reasonable, since physicians are

a rather homogeneous group in this country. Our results are especially alarming because anti-smoking campaigns are usually more successful in doctors than in the general population.

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