A co-design project to raise awareness of the harms of shisha smoking among young people

LILIAN CHAN¹, NOUHAD EL-HADDAD², BECKY FREEMAN¹, ROSS MACKENZIE², DALYA KAREZI³, LISA WOODLAND⁴, BLYTHE O’HARA¹, BEN HARRIS-ROXAS⁵

¹ Sydney School of Public Health and Charles Perkins Centre, Prevention Research Collaboration, The University of Sydney, Camperdown, Australia
² Centre for Primary Health Care and Equity, Faculty of Medicine, University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia
³ Cancer Institute NSW, Sydney, Australia
⁴ Population and Community Health, South Eastern Sydney Local Health District, Darlington, Australia
⁵ School of Population Health, Faculty of Medicine, University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia

Presenter’s email: lilian.chan@sydney.edu.au

Introduction and Aims: Shisha is becoming increasingly popular globally,¹ but is associated with an increased risk of lung and oral cancer,² and a higher risk of cigarette smoking initiation among young people.³ This research aims to develop and evaluate a social marketing campaign that raises awareness of the harms of shisha smoking among young people of Arabic background.

Design and Methods: The project conducted workshops with community champions, young people and health professionals to identify appropriate strategies and messages. The health message that resonated most was “45min=100 cigarettes”. The project was evaluated through an SMS community panel who were sent survey questions before and after the campaign about their awareness of harms, and intention to reduce or cease smoking shisha.

Results: Numerous campaign resources were developed, including a campaign video which had over 350,000 views, website, social media platforms, fact sheets and community worker sessions. The SMS panel recruited 133 people, and showed that a greater proportion had seen or heard something about the harms of shisha smoking after the campaign (67.5% vs 45%, p=0.003), but there was no significant difference in the proportion who intended to reduce or cease smoking shisha.

Discussions and Conclusions: This is one of few published interventions aimed at preventing shisha smoking, particularly focused on young people.⁴,⁵ Through a co-design process, the project was able to raise awareness of messages about the harms of shisha smoking.

Implications for Practice or Policy: This research has demonstrated that a co-design, social marketing approach can be an effective strategy, and should be sustained. Continued community engagement and integration with other interventions are likely required to produce changes in behaviour.

Implications for Translational Research: Research into whether this type of intervention is effective in other communities is important as shisha smoking is now being practiced by other cultural groups.

References:
3. Al Oweini D, Jawad M, Akl, EA. The association of waterpipe tobacco smoking with later initiation of cigarette smoking: a systematic review and meta-analysis exploring the gateway theory. Tobacco Control 2020;29:577-584

Disclosure of Interest Statement: The Shisha No Thanks project is funded by the Cancer Institute NSW. The University of New South Wales was contracted to undertake the evaluation component of the project. LW and LC work for NSW Multicultural Health Communication Service, one of the implementing partners of this project. DK worked for NSW Multicultural Health Communication Service at the time of this project and evaluation. LC is supported by the Prevention Research Support Program, funded by the New South Wales Ministry of Health.

This work is currently under submission for publication in a scientific journal, but this abstract has been significantly changed as to be a different abstract.