Challenging the Smoke in Mental Health & Addictions: an introduction to the Smokefree Coordinator role

J Galea-Singer, L Catchpole • Waitemata District Health Board, Auckland, New Zealand, 2018

Background

Prevalence: tobacco smoking in clients of Specialist Mental Health and Addictions services (SMH&AS) is up to three times higher than the total population (1). On average, life expectancy for mental health and addictions clients is 10–20 years shorter than the total population, mostly attributable to smoking (2).

Culture: historically smoking was strongly tolerated and reinforced within SMH&AS. For example, clinicians provided clients with cigarettes and smoke breaks as part of client treatment plans. Myths abounded, such as the belief that clients did not want to quit, or needed to smoke for stress relief, or that quitting was too hard.

New Zealand systematically implemented the Ask Brief Advice, Cessation Support (ABC) approach across primary and secondary care, through funding and health targets. However, SMH&AS community services were not included in the targets.

References

(2) http://osh.org.uk/information-and-resources/reports/submissions/reports/the-stolen-years/

Interventions

Model: Given the prevalence and culture, dedicated smokefree support needed to be established within SMH&AS. Consistent messaging was needed across the entire healthcare system, including SMH&AS.

Waitemata District Health Board funded dedicated SMH&AS Coordinator roles, placed within the DHB and Non-governmental Organisation (NGO) sector.

The role had three key focus areas to bring about cultural change:
- Deliver training
- Establish smokefree systems
- Develop resources

Outcomes

- Service-specific model targeted at SMH&AS teams, using harm reduction and motivational interviewing approach
- Established visible smokefree leadership, including Smokefree Champions within services
- Set up Smokefree self-audit for NGO’s
- Regular forums for sector education
- Let’s Kick Butt: incentivised group Stop Smoking challenge
- Training of all staff in the ABC approach
- Tailored smokefree training addressing barriers for smokefree in the SMH&AS environment
- Developed comprehensive smokefree environments policy requirements for the NGO sector
- Processes put in place for assessing and supporting service users to become smokefree
- Developed and shared smokefree resources, including newsletter and website
- Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NTR) supplied directly to NGO’s
- Supported services to develop their own Smokefree Action Plans
- Access to designated coordinator for ongoing support and advice relevant to the SMH&AS environment
- Aligned smokefree practices with other initiatives, such as Equally Well
- Created a vision for smokefree to be the norm within SMH&AS
- Visible decrease of smoking amongst staff

Next steps

Continue with established smokefree roles within SMH&AS
Seek opportunities to use innovations safely e.g. vaping
Advocate for MH&A clients to be a priority population for smokefree initiatives.

Conclusion

The work of Smokefree Coordinators has shifted the culture and perceptions around tobacco use, within SMH&AS. As smokefree support develops for SMH&AS, these are being built with the client at the centre and support tailormade to address individual obstacles to becoming smokefree.

Restrictions:
- Poor data collection on smoking status
- Lack of tailored Stop Smoking Service for SMH&AS

Background

Let’s Kick Butt 2017

The Fono “The Crocodiles” team had 3 out of 5 quit

This was Nicholas’s second quit attempt, this time he hopes for good, he used the money he saved to buy a car and has joined the gym.

Esther was initially ambivalent about quitting but agreed to give NRT gum a try, one week later she was quit and has remained so.

Pua was smoking 1 to 2 a day and decided she would stop and save her money for a holiday in the Islands.

Junior and Kanoa both managed to reduce their daily cigarettes and plan to keep reducing.

Outcome

No Butts

Issue 11

MONTH: SEPTEMBER – OCTOBER 2018

Produced by the Northern Regional Alliance, AOHM & WHB
Smokefree Mental Health & Addictions Services

Metro Smokefree News

You May Think. You may say it’s better not to think about it any... The Ministry of Health requires every Health professional to ask about smoking, briefly advise on quit and offer Cessation support ABCD to all patients who smoke, at every consultation. Just a short word can make a huge difference. Many people say these moments are like planting a seed, it is worth remembering seedling that has gone attention to reach their full potential.

Are you an advocate for smokefree.

Metro Smokefree News

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