

General practitioners' approach to tobacco cessation before and after a training program (The FIRST trial: interim analysis)

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Introduction:

- Several effective interventions are available to help primary care patients stop smoking, but they are underused.
- The ongoing FIRST trial (NCT04868474) assesses a training program encouraging general practitioners (GPs) to use a shared decision-making (SDM) tool with all current smokers (intervention), as compared to a brief smoking cessation update (control).

Objective: To compare the effect of the intervention and control training on the types of counselling and strategies used for tobacco cessation by GPs.

Results:

Of the 42 GPs who completed the training:

- 22 were intervention group and 20 control group,
- 62% were women,
- 21% were aged >50 years
- 69% practiced in an urban area
- Majority of GPs were based in Switzerland (33 vs 9 from France).

Methods:

- GPs were recruited from French speaking Switzerland and the Lyon area, France
- GPs were randomized at enrolment to either control or intervention group:
 - Control: 45-minute update on tobacco cessation treatment options without trying to modify their routine
 - Intervention: update plus training to use SDM and a decision aid comparing smoking cessation aids (www.howtoquit.ch)
- Both groups completed questionnaires before and after the training
- Pre-training questionnaire focused on the type of counselling they used most often:
 - sustained intervention, brief advice or motivational interviewing
- Post-training questionnaire focused on which type of counselling they intend to use in the future
- Also explored (Pre and Post) were counselling strategies such as:
 - frequency of follow-up appointments,
 - setting a stop date,
 - prescription of aids,
 - use of vaping products as a tobacco cessation tool

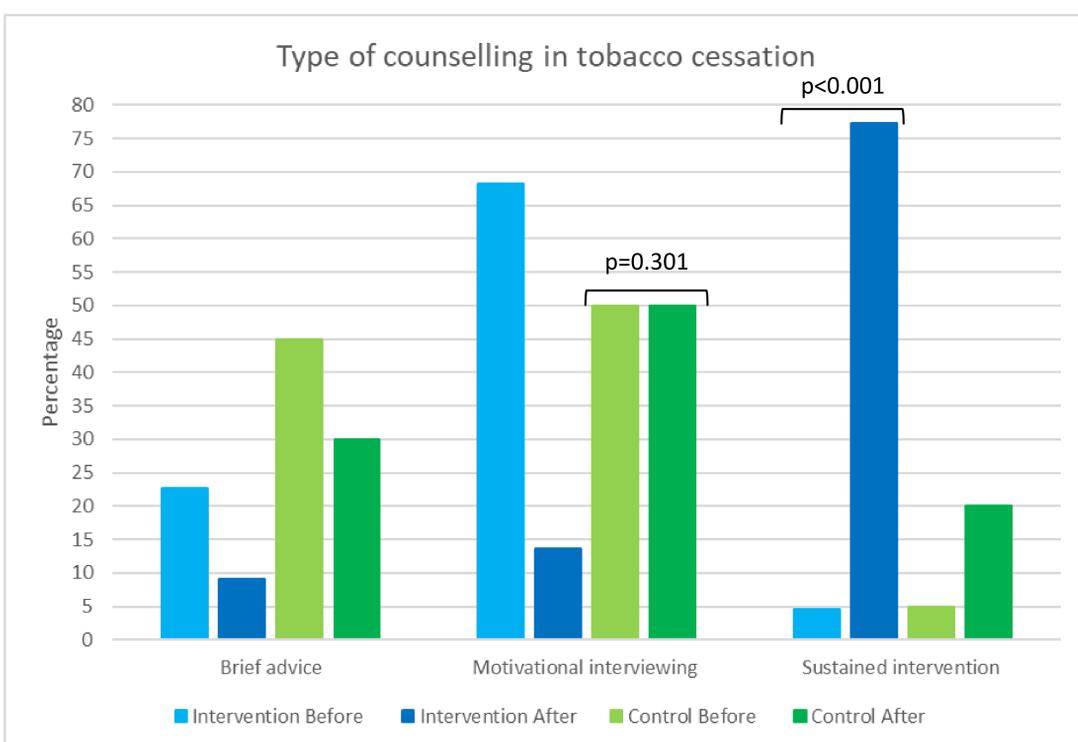


Figure 1

Figure 1 demonstrates the changes seen in types of counselling given before training and those intended to be given by the GPs post training within the intervention and control groups. The control group did not change their focus on motivational interviewing ($p=0.301$), while the intervention group increased their intended use of sustained interventions ($p<0.001$, $p=0.002$ for difference between groups).

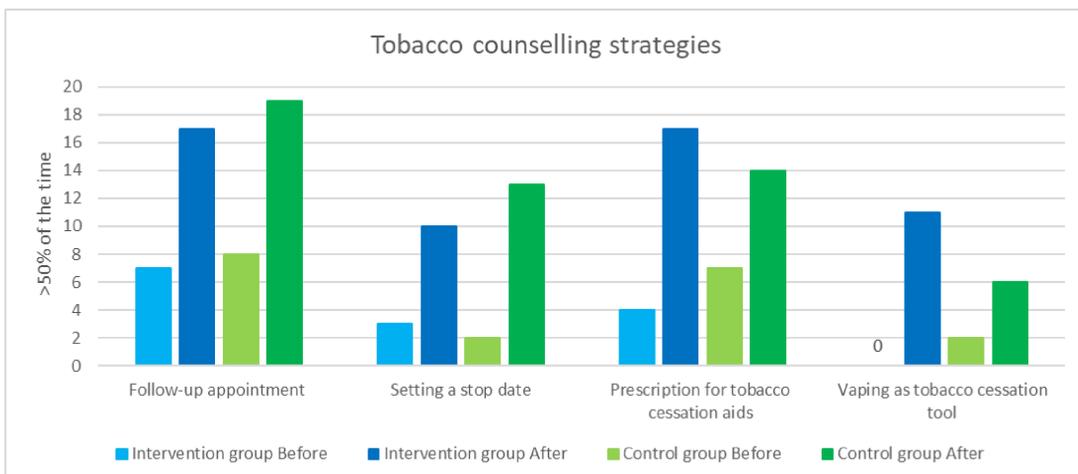


Figure 2

Figure 2 demonstrates the changes seen after the training program in tobacco counselling strategies. Notably, post training the intention to use all the types of tobacco counselling strategies increased similarly in both groups ($p<0.05$ all comparisons before/after, except vaping in control group; $p>0.05$ all comparisons between intervention and control).

Conclusion:

- GPs enrolled in the FIRST trial demonstrated a significant intention to increase the use of tobacco cessation counselling strategies, whether they were in the intervention or control group.
- Concerning types of counselling, post training the control group continued to favour motivational interviewing while the intervention group significantly favoured sustained intervention, namely SDM and the use of a decision aid.