

HTA-Report | Abstract

Federal structures and associated behavioural interventions in prevention of cigarette smoking

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Objectives

The recently published HTA-report "Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of behavioural strategies in the prevention of cigarette smoking" detects a lack of high-quality publications considering the national prevention structures. Included publications do not give any information regarding current interventions in Germany. The goal of this addendum is to give an overview of the federal prevention system and associated measures for behavioural smoking prevention.

Methods

Firstly, relevant tobacco prevention structures with associated tasks and activities were identified. Further, a survey of available project information was conducted in December 2007. This procedure based on systematic analysis in PrevNet-network as well as on manual search on the web sites of primary network centres (PrevNet-Knotenpunkte) or other relevant federal state organisations. A written, postal questionnaire was conducted among network centres, federal state organisations and selected health insurance funds.

Results

Interventions regarding primary prevention of smoking cover a variety of activities and campaigns issued by the Federal Government, several national organisations, federal and local authorities as well as health insurance funds. Institutions such as the German Ministry of Health, the Federal Centre for Health Education (BZgA), the German Cancer Research Center (DKFZ) contribute to smoking prevention on national level. Diverse professional associations, workshops or authorities set up the organisational framework for coordination and planning of tobacco prevention on federal state level. Even on communal level institutional structures in terms of local professional departments and committees are established. The health insurance companies and their associations also play a major role in prevention of smoking uptake.

"Rauchfrei", "Be smart, don't start", "Klasse 2000", "ALF" or "Just be smokefree" are among the most well-established nationwide campaigns or programs. These universal concepts also are implemented on federal state as well as on communal level. Additionally state specific campaigns and programs are developed and conducted. Numerous communal activities complement the federal prevention framework. School is a most common setting for all federal levels as well as for interventions according to § 20 SGB V carried out by health insurance funds. Study results reveal the distribution of the campaign "Be smart- don't start" as well as its associated promotion and coordination through the numerous federal state institutions and sickness funds. In several cases behavioural primary prevention is only

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Within the scope of the



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a part of comprehensive campaigns with environmental (smoke-free institutions) and secondary preventive (smoking cessation) elements. From an organisational point of view, there are plenty of collaborations on different levels of the federal system and in association with health insurance funds.

Discussion and Conclusion

Even though behavioural preventive strategies are mostly applied as school-based programs there is no conclusive evidence for long-term effectiveness of school setting interventions. Within this research no further studies were identified providing evidence for effectiveness and cost-efficacy of behavioural preventive strategies in Germany. Long-term and systematic evaluation is missing for the most part of current measures. Hence, there is a need for further research regarding long-term effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of applied and planned preventive programs. These issues can only be proofed by purposeful evaluation studies in national context. By reason of general limited resources in all fields of prevention activities, such studies are essential in order to provide more efficiency.