

Assisting quitting in pregnant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women who smoke

Chair: Gina La Hera Fuentes

Chair's email: Gina.LaHeraFuentes@uon.edu.au

Authors:

Gina La Hera Fuentes^{1,2}, Gillian Gould¹, Tabassum Rahman^{3,4,5}, Karen McFadyen¹, Allison Hart¹, Rebecca Hyland¹, Alyce Weatherall³, Michelle Kennedy^{3,5}, Amanda L. Baker⁶, Hannah Carter⁷, Michelle Kennedy^{2,4}, Francesco Paolucci⁷, Kym Yuke⁸

¹ Faculty of Health, Southern Cross University Coffs Harbour, Australia; ² Business School, University of Newcastle, Newcastle, Australia; ³ School of Medicine and Public Health, University of Newcastle, Newcastle, Australia; ⁴ Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences, The University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia; ⁵ Hunter Medical Research Institute, New Lambton Heights, Australia, ⁶ NDARC, University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia, ⁷ School of Public Health & Social Work, Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane Queensland, Australia, ⁸ Inala Indigenous Health, Southern Queensland Centre of Excellence in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care, Brisbane, Australia

Aim: *To discuss evidence-based research for improving smoking cessation in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander pregnant women*

Presentation 1:

Tabassum Rahman^{3,4,5}, Alyce Weatherall³, Michelle Kennedy^{3,5}, Amanda L. Baker⁶, Gillian S. Gould¹

Presentation 2:

Karen McFadyen¹, Ratika Kumar¹, Rebecca Hyland¹, Allison Hart¹, Gillian S. Gould¹

Presentation 3:

Rebecca Hyland¹, Gillian S. Gould¹, Gina La Hera Fuentes^{1,2}, Sharni Carberry¹, Allison Hart¹, Karen McFadyen¹, Ratika Kumar¹

Presentation 4:

Gina La Hera Fuentes^{2,1}, Hannah Carter⁷, Michelle Kennedy^{3,5}, Francesco Paolucci², Rebecca Hyland¹, Gillian Gould¹

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PRESENTATION 1: My Quitting Stories: Strategies Aboriginal women applied to maintain smoking abstinence in pregnancy and beyond

Presenting Authors:

Tabassum Rahman

Presenter's email: tabassum.rahman@uon.edu.au

Introduction: Most women, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women (hereafter Aboriginal) woman, who give up smoking during pregnancy relapse to smoking postnatally. There is limited evidence on strategies that are helpful in staying smoke-free during and beyond pregnancy. This is the first study that explores primarily the strategies Aboriginal women applied for attaining and maintaining abstinence and the support they received.

Method / Approach: Qualitative interviews were conducted between October 2020 and June 2021, in urban New South Wales, Australia, with 12 Aboriginal women who either smoked tobacco or quit smoking and had been pregnant in the last five years. Aboriginal Research Assistants recruited participants, participated in data collection and data analysis. Data were thematically analysed.

Key Findings / Results : Major themes that emerged from the data include: a) aspiration to quit smoking; b) strong mindset; c) strategies to stay smoke-free; d) supports received; and e) service and policy recommendations. Protecting children from second-hand smoke had salience for the maintenance of abstinence. Having a strong mindset was perceived as a prerequisite to staying smoke-free. Use of multiple coping strategies in combination was frequently expressed. Knowledge about tobacco-related harms, the way nicotine dependence works, and the available support options was empowering and enabled informed decision making and actions around smoking cessation.

Discussions and Conclusions: This qualitative study conducted with 12 Aboriginal women revealed that Aboriginal women employ multiple strategies (cognitive, behavioural and social) to quit smoking and stay smoke-free. The strategies warrant further exploration with different Aboriginal communities across Australia and consideration of inclusion in smoking cessation care.

Implications for Practice or Policy: New initiatives may include restricting the availability and accessibility of tobacco, more Aboriginal-led smoking cessation services and empowering Aboriginal women with information on helpful quitting and abstinence maintaining strategies.

PRESENTATION 2: ‘*Pitched at the right level, understandable and easy to use*’ a qualitative study of stakeholder views about the iSISTAQUIT (Supporting Indigenous Smokers to Assist Quitting) training intervention

Presenting Authors:

Karen McFadyen, Allison Hart

Presenter’s email: karen.mcfadyen@scu.edu.au, allison.hart@scu.edu.au

Introduction: With 44% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women smoking while pregnant (compared with 10% of non-indigenous counterparts), maternal smoking is a high priority. iSISTAQUIT trains health professionals (HPs) in assisting Aboriginal women to quit smoking. This research aimed to evaluate perspectives about iSISTAQUIT from a broad range of stakeholders post-study.

Methods: iSISTAQUIT end-of-study qualitative interviews were conducted via Zoom, with 24 participants nationally. Participants included HPs, managers, policymakers, advisory panel members, and iSISTAQUIT project members. Interviews were transcribed verbatim and coded by two independent coders using NVivo software. The coders used deductive analysis to utilise themes within the COM-B (Capability, Opportunity, Motivation, Behaviour) model and a systematic synthesis approach to present the findings.

Key Findings: iSISTAQUIT training was universally applauded as improving the capability of HPs and services. It was seen as effective, culturally appropriate, and valuable to HPs working with pregnant Aboriginal women. The opportunity to complete the training and the length of time of the training were frequently identified as impacting the intervention’s implementation. Time was considered a physical and social enabler and barrier. The training was completed and the intervention adopted in sites where the environment was supportive, and disregarded in sites where the training was not identified as useful. HP motivation varied according to their perception of the training's value and time commitment.

Conclusions: iSISTAQUIT training is culturally sound, effective training which may be more successfully implemented if its benefits are highlighted to senior staff.

Implications for Practice: Educating health service managers regarding the benefits of the iSISTAQUIT training package may increase intervention uptake and implementation.

PRESENTATION 3: Qualitative evaluation of the “Change starts with a Chat” videos from the iSISTAQUIT social media campaign

Presenting Authors:

Rebecca Hyland, Allison Hart

Presenter’s email: rebecca.hyland@scu.edu.au, allison.hart@scu.edu.au

Introduction: The iSISTAQUIT social media campaign is a positively framed campaign co-designed by Aboriginal communities for their communities. To increase awareness about smoking cessation and iSISTAQUIT, we conducted a social media campaign from December 2021 to September 2022. The aim of this study was to qualitatively evaluate responses of Aboriginal community members and health professionals (HP) to the videos.

Method: We conducted yarning circles for the campaign evaluation in three locations: Queensland (Logan), New South Wales (Coffs Harbour), and South Australia (Ceduna). Sixteen community women and twenty HPs participated in separate yarning circles, sharing their perspectives on the campaign videos. A semi-structured moderated guide was used to lead the conversations. Audio-recordings were transcribed verbatim and read repeatedly to gain immersion by Aboriginal and non- Aboriginal researchers. Themes were identified and reported.

Key Findings: Community members and health practitioners expressed positive feedback about the videos. They found the length appropriate and appreciated the respectful language. The videos were considered empathic, realistic with relatable characters and a positive message. The videos instilled hope in practitioners about starting quitting smoking conversations. HPs recommended including information about vaping. Community members and women identified with the financial benefits of quitting smoking and they recommended representing a diverse range of family structures in the videos.

Conclusions and Next Steps: The evaluation of the social media campaign revealed positive feedback from HPs and community members. While the overall response to the campaign videos was positive, valuable suggestions for improvement were also provided, e.g., to include content about vaping. These insights will be crucial for enhancing future iterations of the campaign to ensure its relevance and effectiveness.

Implications for Practice or Policy: Positively framed campaigns are important to provide culturally appropriate messages about smoking and vaping cessation. There is a preference for strength-based messages of empowerment.

PRESENTATION 4 : Impact evaluation of a Smoking Cessation Intervention Using the FAIT Framework

Presenting Authors:

Gina La Hera Fuentes, Rebecca Hyland

Presenter's email: Gina.LaHeraFuentes@uon.edu.au, rebecca.hyland@scu.edu.au

Introduction: iSISTAQUIT is the implementation phase of an intervention that provides health professionals (HP) with skills in offering smoking cessation intervention to pregnant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women. The intervention included online self-paced training, printed resources for the HPs and the women, and a social media campaign. Additionally, services that wanted to participate in additional research components were offered templates for their electronic medical records, nicotine replacement therapy and smokerlyzers.

Method/Approach: This study employs the Framework to Assess the Impact from Translational health research (FAIT) that includes a comprehensive approach to assess the multifaceted impacts of translational health research initiatives.

Effectiveness /Acceptability /Implementation: The study identified positive process and impact outcomes across several areas, including capacity building, knowledge enhancement, policy influence, practice impact, and health system improvements. A total of 85 health providers (majority midwives and nurses) from 40 services (73% Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services) participated in the training, receiving printed resources to support their work with Aboriginal pregnant women. Additionally, a community of practice was established, enabling monthly engagement for ongoing training such as case presentations, progress discussions, resource sharing, and information sessions on tobacco cessation. The team were invited to promote the project via multiple professional and academic fora. Further funding was obtained to ensure the project has ongoing impact.

Discussions and Conclusions: The project had broad reach into Aboriginal services and further connections with policy-makers. Although the implementation demonstrated positive impacts in many areas, it is important to note that smoking cessation rates were not measured in this study.

Implications for Practice or Policy: Providing training to healthcare professionals on smoking cessation techniques and equipping them with printed materials for consultations can contribute to long-term sustainability in addressing tobacco use among Aboriginal pregnant women. The ongoing phases of iSISTAQUIT will promote vertical and horizontal scale up.

Discussion Section:

Discussant: Kym Yuke, Tobacco Treatment Specialist, Inala Indigenous Health, Southern Queensland Centre of Excellence in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care

Discussant's email: Kym.Yuke@health.qld.gov.au

The discussant will summarise the session and convene an interactive conversation with attendees and presenters. Points of discussion will include:

- How to engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in conversations about quitting
- Experiences of symposium participants about what training is available to health professionals and services

Learning aims

- Understanding the unique challenges associated with the implementation of smoking cessation among Aboriginal pregnant women.
- Learning evidence-based strategies and interventions to support Aboriginal pregnant women in quitting smoking.
- Understanding the importance of ongoing support and follow-up to maintain smoking cessation among Aboriginal pregnant women.
- Providing recommendations to improve smoking cessation programs targeted at Aboriginal pregnant women.