

Introduction

Tobacco use is highly addictive and harms every organ in the body. And consequently, high proportion of healthcare service users are either tobacco addicts or directly affected by tobacco use. **Healthcare services** and health professionals have an obligation under FCTC to address and reduce the use and the health effects of tobacco, in all its forms.

To effectively deliver on this high expectation, health professionals need to work in supportive environments, engage in a wide range of tobacco management activities i.e. prevention, control, diagnosis, treatment and cessation as well as working in partnership with community groups and national initiatives to achieve a totally tobacco free society.

Objectives

The main objective of Global Network for tobacco free healthcare services (GNTH) since its inception in 1999, as a European initiative, is to provide healthcare services with a systematic and comprehensive approach to tobacco management. www.tobaccofreehealthcare.org

- **Motivating healthcare services** to implement tobacco free environments that protect non-tobacco users and provide integrated care and support for tobacco users in their quitting process.
- **Providing standards** within healthcare environments that integrate quality improvement, management commitment and the active involvement of all employees in tobacco management.

Our quality standards reflect and integrate all relevant and key aspects of tobacco control within healthcare settings, into a practical, systematic and organisational approach that is in accordance with the WHO/FCTC and Art 14 guidelines (**GNTH Concept**).

Methods

GNTH Standards were initiated by 6 countries (France, Ireland, Sweden, Spain, Denmark, Germany) in 2003 as part of an EU-Funded project, and updated and further developed over the past 15 years. The GNTH concept utilises evidence-based standards (initial 10 now 8) with detailed implementation criteria and a self-audit tool that supports and guides healthcare services in effective implementation of tobacco management and promotes continuous monitoring and quality improvement.

Networking is seen as a core GNTH supportive strategy. The formation of networks of healthcare service, **national or regional networks**, actively supports implementation of the GNTH concept, provides peer motivation and facilitates the dissemination of good practices on a local and global level.

Recognition is given within a certificate process. This acknowledges implementation progress and motivates continuous quality improvement. High-level implementation of all 8 GNTH Standards is identified and recognised within the GNTH GOLD Forum Process. Successful healthcare services working on the GOLD level are given global recognition and sustained implementation is fostered through a 4-year renewal requirement.

Results

GNTH Concept - Research in 2006 (273 hospitals in 12 networks within 9 countries) found statistical significance of $p < 0.01$, use the non-parametric Friedman test, for improvement over time in using the GNTH concept. Findings replicated in various small research studies in other countries.



Networking with healthcare services globally has resulted in the GNTH concept being translated into 15 languages (2018) and effectively implemented in a variety of health systems in 20 countries on 4 continents.

Participants 2006 Audit

Country	No. of Hospitals Participated	No. of Hospitals members of ENSH	No. of Hospitals not members of ENSH
Belgium (1)	14	14	0
Belgium (2)	49	49	0
Denmark	9	9	0
France	4	4	0
France	11	11	0
Germany	20	20	0
Ireland	20	20	0
Poland	10	10	0
Sweden	1	1	0
Spain (Andalusia)	1	1	0
Spain (Catalonia)	42	42	0
Spain (Galicia)	16	16	0



Recognition – 8 peer-review recognition process (GOLD Forum Process) have been undertaken since 2009. Candidate healthcare services participated from 8 countries [Austria, Germany, Ireland, Spain (Catalonia, Andalusia), Taiwan, Kansas-USA and Victoria-Australia] on 4 continents. Next Event - <https://www.hphconferences.org/bologna2018/program/?L=0>

Conclusions

The GNTH concept has been proven to support health services globally to implement comprehensive tobacco management, representing international best practice overcoming cultural, political and structural differences. If implemented universally, healthcare services and professionals will be enabled to deliver effectively on their obligations as defined in the WHO/FCTC. To join the Global Network visit : www.tobaccofreehealthcare.org

References

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