

Additional Information..... Smoking prevention in young people: A cluster randomised controlled trial of implementation intentions.

This intervention programme is designed to reduce smoking in adolescents through repeated implementation intentions about how to refuse offers of cigarettes. Both in the UK and internationally, tobacco smoking continues to be an important cause of morbidity and mortality. For example, smoking related illnesses are estimated to kill over 100,000 people in the UK each year (Cancer Research UK, 2011; Department of Health, 2011), usually later in life. Yet smoking is a behaviour that is, in general, taken up between the ages of 10 and 20 years.

A variety of different research studies have supported the idea that the vast majority of smokers take up this habit as adolescents (ASH, 2011; Paavola et al., 1996; Royal College of Physicians, 1992) with an estimated 90% of adult smokers having started before they reached 21 years of age (American Lung Association, 2002). The General Household Survey (2007) reported that 38% of adult regular smokers took up the habit before the age of 15 years. This appears to be the case despite the fact that health promotion messages have ensured that awareness of the health consequences of smoking is now widespread, even among the young. In the UK, while the rates of regular smoking at 11 years of age are only 0.5%, this rapidly rises to 15% by 15 years of age, and then more gradually to around 20% among young adults (Fuller & Sanchez, 2010).

The current Department of Health (2011) plan is to reduce the rates of regular smoking in 15 year olds to 12% or less by the end of 2015. Two important ways to tackle smoking-related harm are interventions to help individuals (usually adults) quit smoking and interventions to help individuals (usually adolescents) not to initiate smoking.

The present research will conduct a fully powered phase III cluster randomised controlled trial of repeated implementation intentions about how to refuse offers of cigarettes in a sample of 11-16 year olds across two distinct regions of England (West Yorkshire and Staffordshire) with different demographic characteristics. Following on from our previous explanatory trial, we would adapt the intervention and its delivery mechanisms in this pragmatic trial, to applied settings in schools.