Integrating Smoking Cessation in Dental Practice

Clinical Audit

Introduction

A funded smoking cessation audit has been designed to encourage dental teams to integrate smoking cessation into routine dental practice. Dentists with an NHS contract are able to undertake a funded Audit through Postgraduate Dental Education (Wales Deanery). The audit process can also be adapted by the Community Dental Services and private only dentists to implement brief intervention for smoking cessation and claim verifiable CPD.

Rationale for the audit topic

Smoking is linked specifically to a range of oral diseases, including periodontal disease and oral cancer. A recent systematic review suggests that smoking and tobacco control interventions in the dental setting that include oral examination and counselling are likely to be effective.

1,278, 138 adults accessed NHS GDS dentistry in the 24 months prior to 30 June 2014. If we assume, 21% of those adults were smokers, 268,409 smokers attended NHS dental practices in the 24 month period. In 2010, 7 out of 10 smokers reported that they would like to stop smoking. Hence, there is significant potential for dental teams to make an impact on smoking cessation rates in Wales.

The Tobacco Control Action Plan for Wales aims to reduce smoking prevalence in Wales to 16% by 2020. This plan states that pharmacists, dentists and other primary care workers should take every opportunity to encourage smokers to stop smoking, advise on ‘quit strategies’ and give information on cessation support services and nicotine replacement therapy. The plan aims to increase the proportion of smokers accessing NHS Smoking Cessation Services in Wales and includes a specific dental target:

To ensure that by end of 2016, 50% of dental practices have at least one clinical team member who can apply brief intervention, understand how to identify smokers who are interested in smoking cessation and know where to direct them for further advice and support. This proportion is to rise to 75% of practices by 2020.
Dental teams have the potential to make a big impact on smoking cessation rates in Wales. Evidence shows that most primary care dental teams believe that helping patients stop smoking is important, but the lack of practice time and uncertainty about what local smoking cessation services are available and/or how to refer has been cited as barriers.

Further information on smoking and tobacco use and the important role of dental practices in tobacco control can be found in the following documents:

- Delivering better oral health: an evidence based toolkit for prevention
- Smoke free and Smiling: Helping dental patients to quit tobacco

**Brief Intervention**

Implementation of brief intervention in smoking cessation will be easier if dental teams:

1. Understand the process of brief intervention
2. Undertake brief intervention training
3. Understand why a smoker continues to smoke
4. Understand how smoking cessation services are organised and delivered in Wales
5. Participate in the Deanery-funded smoking cessation audit to understand how AAA approach can be integrated into dental practice.

**1. Process of Brief Intervention**

Smokers want and trust advice from healthcare professionals. Brief intervention in smoking cessation is a part of oral health promotion and is effective in helping smokers stop smoking. It is a method of discussing smoking cessation in a positive, non-confrontational way to encourage smokers to think about giving up and enabling them to access specialist support when they are ready. The process for brief intervention follows the Ask, Advise and Act (AAA) model (Figure 1) and can be easily incorporated into everyday dental practice. The best outcomes are achieved when those who are interested in stopping are referred or signposted directly to a local smoking cessation service.

**2. Brief intervention training for dental teams**

In Wales, Brief Intervention training has been developed by Stop Smoking Wales and Postgraduate Dental Education (Wales Deanery). Dental teams can access this training for free. This training also counts towards the Continuous Professional Development (CPD) requirement of the General Dental Council.

**Dental teams can now access a free Brief Intervention E-learning package. Please see the flyer for details on how to login into to NHS e-learning:**

http://www.stopsmokingwales.com/nhs-e-learning-package

Alternatively, teams can contact Stop Smoking Wales or Postgraduate Dental Education, Wales Deanery for local availability of training.

More information can be found at: http://www.stopsmokingwales.com/for-health-professionals

Figure 1- The Ask, Advise, Act Model for providing brief intervention for smoking cessation (modified for this audit from Delivering Better Oral Health, Public Health England, 2014)
3. Why a smoker continues to smoke?
Whether smoked or chewed, nicotine from tobacco is highly addictive. Many smokers continue smoking not by choice but because they are addicted, with a
large part of this addiction arising from dependence on the nicotine delivered rapidly to the brain with each inhalation. Many smokers also associate smoking with other daily activities. Addiction to nicotine means that there are powerful urges to smoke that have to be overcome. Most cigarette smokers report that they would like to stop, and make many attempts to stop smoking. More than a third of all smokers make at least one attempt to stop in a given year but only about 2-3% of smokers succeed long term by using will power alone. While a few people seem capable of stopping without any support, the majority benefit from using medications and the support of their local stop smoking service. The majority of smokers cite health reasons and the cost of smoking as reasons for wanting to stop smoking.

Figure 2- Three main factors that need to be addressed while attempting to stop smoking

For patients who currently are not ready to quit or do not want to quit, a harm reduction approach should be taken. The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) have released a Smoking: harm reduction Quality Statement that states:

The best way for a person to reduce illness and mortality associated with smoking is to stop smoking in one step. However, not everyone who smokes feels able to, or wants to, stop, or they may want to stop but without giving up nicotine. It is important that these people are encouraged to try a harm-reduction approach to smoking.

This means that if a patient smokes but isn't ready or doesn't want to quit, patients should be advised to ask their GP or pharmacist to discuss the support they can be given to reduce the amount they smoke (and the products available on prescription).

4. Smoking cessation services in Wales
Smokers can access free smoking cessation services in Wales. Smoking cessation services are delivered by Stop Smoking Wales, some pharmacies and GPs.

**Stop Smoking Wales (SSW)**
Smokers need to be prepared to cope with the challenges they face in the early stages of their attempt to stop smoking. SSW provides free NHS sessions which are delivered in local community venues. Smokers receive expert behavioural support to:
- Manage withdrawal symptoms and effects of stopping smoking
- Use various coping strategies
- Access and use Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) in conjunction with behavioural support

SSW has developed an e-referral system to make the process of referring willing patients to their service more efficient. The Deanery has arranged to set up participants of this audit with individual accounts for the e-referral system.

There is a tick box on the audit registration form which allows the contact details of the dental practice to be shared by the Deanery with a team member in SSW. SSW will then create a user name and password for the dental practice, which the Deanery will pass on to the practice. An account will be established to enable e-referrals via the system. Heather Stewart (StewartH5@cardiff.ac.uk) will advise you of account details.

When a patient agrees to be referred to SSW, a member of the dental practice simply has to go to the secure website: [www.tinyurl.com/sswrefer](http://www.tinyurl.com/sswrefer), log in and complete the simple referral page (name, gender and phone number of the patient are the only mandatory fields).

Further information about SSW services is available at: [www.stopsmokingwales.com](http://www.stopsmokingwales.com)

**Pharmacies with Level 2 and Level 3 Smoking Cessation Services**
Community pharmacists providing Level 2 Smoking Cessation Service provide Nicotine Replacement therapy (NRT), free of charge, and work with SSW to supply NRT for clients undergoing behavioural support to stop smoking. Community pharmacists providing Level 3 Smoking Cessation Service assess motivation and provide one-to-one assessment of client’s needs; initiate, supply and monitor the use of NRT and provide motivational support.

**The list of pharmacies contracted to provide smoking cessation services in your Local Health Board area is provided in your audit pack. Other LHB pharmacy services are available on the Deanery website.**

**General Medical Services (GMS)**
GPs also provide advice on smoking cessation. As well as NRT products, GPs can also prescribe other products to help patients stop smoking.
How to participate in the audit

All NHS dental practitioners in Wales are advised and encouraged to participate in a funded smoking cessation audit available through the Dental Postgraduate Section of the Wales Deanery.

Funding and CPD

Funding is available for each General Dental Practitioner who holds an NHS Contract and Performer Number. You can claim for this audit over and above any standard CAPR claim you have made in your 3 year audit cycle.

Dental Foundation Dentists and Dental Care Professionals are welcome to take part in the audit but are not eligible to claim funding for it. All participants are eligible to receive 3 hours verifiable CPD.

Audit Duration

Once approval has been given and you have received your Unique Identifier Number you will need to collect data using the Patient Data Capture Form 1 for every patient identified as a smoker / smokeless tobacco user / e-cigarette user for data completed for 30 patients or the duration of 3 months if required.

It is recommended that dental teams nominate a staff member within the practice as a project lead for the Smoking Cessation Audit.

All participants in the audit providing advice to patients must access brief intervention training in smoking cessation prior to the audit. Previous training will be acceptable if completed within three years prior to starting the audit. Copies of certificates of evidence of training in brief intervention from the project lead need to be sent in when applying to start the audit.

Information about how to access the brief intervention e-learning package can be found at:
http://www.stopsmokingwales.com/nhs-e-learning-package
(The NHS E-Learning package dental enrolment key is – Dent15%.)

Alternatively, check the CPD course calendar on the Deanery website:
http://www.dentpostgradwales.ac.uk/dpg_cal/SearchForCourse.asp

Deanery website e-learning Smoking Cessation module:
(If this module is undertaken then the PDF of the end-of-module quiz must be provided as evidence of participation)

NCSCT – Very Brief Advice on Smoking:
http://elearning.ncsct.co.uk/vba_wales-launch
(If this module is undertaken then a screenshot of the final page of the module must be provided as evidence of participation)

How to register for the audit

1. The nominated project lead contacts Heather Stewart in the Dental Postgraduate Section of the Wales Deanery (Tel No: 029 20687780, email: StewartH5@cardiff.ac.uk) requesting to undertake the audit.
2. The project lead is sent the audit pack which contains:
   - Registration form
   - Information on providing smoking cessation (this document)
   - Form 2- Patient data capture form (photocopies should be made before filling in blank sheet)
   - Form 3 - Audit log sheet (photocopies should be made before filling in blank sheet) [https://cardiff.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/smoking-cessation-form-2-audit-log-sheet](https://cardiff.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/smoking-cessation-form-2-audit-log-sheet)
   - Audit evaluation form (to be completed at end of audit, online [https://cardiff.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/scevaluation](https://cardiff.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/scevaluation) or by returning a hard copy in the post)
   - Claim form

3. The nominated project lead returns the completed registration form to Heather Stewart along with certificate of evidence of training in brief intervention.

4. On receipt of the registration form Heather Stewart informs the practice lead of the unique id number for their audit and the start and finish date of the audit. If 30 patients are reached before this date then the audit may end at this point.

5. The Deanery contacts SSW with contact details of applicant practices. SSW will then create a user name and password for the dental practice, the Deanery will pass this information on to the practice.

**How to carry out the audit**

1. For each patient that is identified as a smoker/smokeless tobacco user, e-cigarette user, Form 1- patient data capture form must be completed. This collects data which should then be transferred onto Form 2 - audit log sheet. Form 1 can then be inserted and retained in the patient’s clinical records.

2. Form 2 - The audit log sheet should be used to record details for all patients for which form 1 is completed. Multiple sheets of the log sheet should be used during the three month data collection period.

3. Once the three month period is complete, the nominated project lead submits the following documents to Heather Stewart via email or post:

   **To submit:**
   - Completed audit log sheets – Form 2 by post or electronically using the following link [https://cardiff.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/smoking-cessation-form-2-audit-log-sheet](https://cardiff.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/smoking-cessation-form-2-audit-log-sheet)
   - Completed claim form (Form 4) – signed hard copy to be posted – we advise sending this within 6 months of completing the audit
• audit evaluation form (Form 3) – alternatively this can be completed electronically using the following link
https://cardiff.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/scevaluation

It is the project lead’s responsibility to collate the above forms and submit as a complete set.

After the audit is completed

1. Heather Stewart will process the claim form and send to NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (NWSSP) in order for the Dentist to be paid.

2. Dental practitioners are encouraged to continue to use Form 1- patient data capture form in the patients’ records as a prompt to follow-up with the patient at future recall appointments:
   • if a referral to SSW was made, showing interest in whether the patient attended appointments, and if they made a quit attempt
   • if information was given, whether the patient made a self-referral or if they now feel ready to be referred
   • if appropriate, the Ask, Advise, Act approach can be followed at each recall appointment.

3. An audit report will be prepared annually for the stakeholders (jointly by Dental Public Health and the Dental Postgraduate Section of the Wales Deanery). The Audit report will not identify individual practices involved in the audits.

Standards of the Audit:

1. All patients have up to date medical history which includes their smoking status and use of smokeless tobacco.

2. All smokers are given individualised advice on benefits of smoking cessation and increased likelihood of success with use of smoking cessation services.

3. All smokers are asked whether they are ready to stop smoking.

4. Smokers who are ready to stop smoking are referred/signposted to Stop Smoking Wales or provided with information about the services available locally through pharmacies.

5. Records must be kept of patients’ smoking status, advice provided to smokers and their readiness to stop smoking/tobacco use.

6. Follow up of all smokers at their next dental examination.

REFERENCES


Stats Wales 2014. NHS patients treated for adults and children by local health board. https://statswales.wales.gov.uk/Catalogue/Health-and-Social-Care/General-Dental-Services/Current-Contract/NHSPatientsTreatedForAdultsAndChildren-by-LocalHealthBoard-PatientType


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