

Mass media interventions effective for smoking cessation**Clinical Question**

How effective are mass media interventions for smoking cessation in adults?

Bottom Line

There was evidence that comprehensive tobacco control programmes which include mass media campaigns (MMCs) can be effective in changing smoking behaviour in adults, but the evidence comes from a heterogeneous group of studies of variable methodological quality. One state-wide tobacco control programme (Massachusetts) showed positive results up to eight years after the campaign. Another (California) showed positive results during the period of adequate funding and implementation and in final evaluation since the beginning of the programme. Six of nine studies carried out in communities or regions showed some positive effects on smoking behaviour and at least one significant change in smoking prevalence (Sydney). The intensity and duration of MMCs might influence effectiveness, but length of follow-up and concurrent secular trends and events made this difficult to quantify. No consistent relationship was observed between campaign effectiveness and age, education, ethnicity or gender.

Caveat

The evidence came from a heterogeneous group of studies of variable methodological quality. Studies differed in design, settings, duration, content and intensity of intervention, length of follow-up, methods of evaluation and also in definitions and measures of smoking behaviour used.

Context

Mass media tobacco control campaigns can reach large numbers of people. Much of the literature is focused on the effects of tobacco control advertising on young people, but there are also a number of evaluations of campaigns targeting adult smokers, which show mixed results. Campaigns may be local, regional or national, and may be combined with other components of a comprehensive tobacco control

policy.

Cochrane Systematic Review [Bala MM et al. Mass media interventions for smoking cessation in adults. Cochrane Reviews, 2017, Issue 11. Art. No.: CD004704.DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD004704.pub4.](#) This review contains 11 studies involving over 30 million participants.

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