Priorities for Adolescent Smoking Prevention and Cessation Research and Practice

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Research and practice questions

- Which young people smoke and why?
- Which interventions are effective in preventing and/or reducing youth smoking?

What do we know and what more do we need to know to be more effective?
Research and practice questions

- Which young people smoke and why?
  - what do we mean by young people?
  - what are the key influences?
  - do these differ by age, gender, SES, ethnicity?
  - do they interact and in what ways?
Becoming a smoker is a process

Pre-contemplation
↓
Contemplation
↓
Action/Experimentation
↓
Habituation/Addiction
↓
Maintenance/Regular/ ‘Adult’ smoking
Becoming a smoker

- Not always uni-directional progression
- Variable length and time
- Dependence/addiction can be rapid
- Extends into late teens
- Young people v adult v our understandings:
  - being a smoker
  - addiction
  - quitting
Being a smoker

- Casual/social smoker v Smoker:
  - pattern and amount of smoking
  - buying own
  - want or need
- Habit v Addiction
  - want or need
  - quitting experiences
  - withdrawal
- Implications- interpretation of research
  - blurring between prevention and cessation
Why young people smoke

- Aspirational (desirable, fashionable)
- Acceptable (socially, culturally)
- Functional (role, meaning)
- Accessible (available, affordable)
- Addictive (long term behaviour)
Research gaps

- Inequalities - gender
  - SES
  - ethnicity
- Process and trajectories eg key transitions, older teens, life-course perspective
- Young person centred v tobacco centred
- Context and culture - micro/macro, dynamic
- Inter-relationships
Tobacco and young people - a life course inequalities framework

Childhood circumstances → Pathways to adulthood → Current circumstances → Smoking behaviour

Policy and practice levers
Research gaps

- Inequalities - gender
  - SES
  - ethnicity
- Process and trajectories eg key transitions, older teens, life-course perspective
- Young person centred v tobacco centred
- Context and culture - micro/macro, dynamic
- Inter-relationships
Some policy, programme, practice implications

- Address all three levels of influence
- Congruent with adolescent girls’ and boys’ gendered experiences of smoking (e.g., role, meanings) and wider social worlds (e.g., media, peer education, schools)
- Integrate within wider health promotion to support youth in transitions e.g., creating desirable alternatives for identity construction for girls
- Link with addressing inequalities
Research and practice questions

*Which interventions are effective in preventing and/or reducing youth smoking?*

- Aspirational (desirable, fashionable)
- Acceptable (socially, culturally)
- Functional (role, meaning)
- Accessible (available, affordable)
- Addictive (long term behaviour)
Aspirational (Research)

- Stop all tobacco marketing - point of sale, packets
  Evaluate impact, new tobacco industry tactics
- Reduce positive media images of smoking
  Young people’s exposure, impact
- Health promotion campaigns and programmes at national and local level
Health promotion (Research)

- Comprehensive, well resourced, sustained
- National level- mass media campaigns
  Messages, tailoring, exposure, tone
- Local level - educational setting (eg school, college)
  - community setting (eg youth)
  Pilot v demonstration v dissemination (eg practicality, feasibility, sustainability, cost), older teens
- New media- viral marketing, internet, texting
  Innovation, evaluation
Acceptability (Research)

- Reduce adult smoking
- Media campaigns - adults and young people
- Smokefree public places
- Smokefree homes

Impact on children and young people - attitudes, social norms, behaviour
Access and availability (Research)

- Price
- Size of pack
- Age of sale - enforcement, sources, behaviour
- Illegal/smuggled
- Family and friends - can we change attitudes and/or behaviour?

Impact gender, SES, age
Addiction/Cessation (Research)

- Cessation and young people - no clear UK evidence on effectiveness - new studies?
- Challenges – reach and effectiveness
- Cost-effectiveness
- Cessation v health promotion
- Age, gender, SES, addiction/consumption
- Understanding addiction, cessation motivation, process, relapse behaviour.
Research and practice questions

- Which interventions are effective in preventing and/or reducing youth smoking?
- prevention and/or cessation?
- what works for whom in which circumstances?
- pilot v demonstration v dissemination
- levels: policy, practice, national, local
- economics eg cost-effectiveness
- understanding complexity eg additive or synergistic effects
- reducing inequalities