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Engaging with people who smoke as part of a smoking cessation campaign

Submission date
08/10/2024

Recruitment status
No longer recruiting

Registration date
10/10/2024

Overall study status
Completed

Last Edited
04/03/2025

Condition category
Other

[_] Prospectively registered
[_] Protocol
[_] Statistical analysis plan
[X] Results
[_] Individual participant data

Plain English summary of protocol
Background and study aims:
To address cigarette smoking as a chronic relapsing disease, long-term engagement (LTE) interventions have shown some promise. This study aims to assess the effects of incorporating long-term engagement into a smoking cessation social marketing campaign on participants' quit-smoking journeys

Who can participate?
Adults between the ages of 35 and 64 years who smoke cigarettes and live in the provinces of Ontario and Quebec

What does the study involve?
Half of the participants were randomly assigned to the intervention group and half to the comparison group. The intervention group received monthly emails connecting participants to campaign news and activities and mini surveys informing campaign refinement, feedback opportunities via focus groups and interviews, financial incentives, and proactive knowledge exchange presenting study findings. The control group received no proactive engagement. Both groups responded to baseline and follow-up surveys every 6 months.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?
The expected benefit is improving the chances of quitting smoking. In addition, participants benefit from feeling supported during their quit journeys. There are no significant risks.

Where is the study run from?
The Ontario Tobacco Research Unit at the University of Toronto (Canada)

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?
February 2021 to December 2023

Who is funding the study?
The study is funded by the federal government of Canada's Health Canada Substance Use and Addictions Program

Who is the main contact?
Prof. Robert Schwartz, robert.schwartz@utoronto.ca

Contact information

Type(s)
Public, Scientific, Principal investigator

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Additional identifiers

Protocol serial number
University of Toronto RIS# 211666

Study information

Scientific Title
Long-term engagement in smoking cessation campaign: a mixed methods randomized trial

Acronym
LTESCC

Study objectives
Embedding frequent long-term engagement with adults trying to quit smoking cigarettes in a social marketing campaign is attractive and effective in increasing smoking cessation behaviors.

Ethics approval required
Ethics approval required

Ethics approval(s)
Approved 25/05/2021, University of Toronto Research Ethics Board (McMurrich Building, 12 Queen’s Park Crescent West, 2nd Floor, Toronto, M5S 1S8, Canada; +1 (0)416 946 3273; ethics.review@utoronto.ca), ref: 41076

Primary study design
Interventional

Study design
Randomized controlled trial

Study type(s)
Treatment

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied
Cigarette smoking

Interventions
Using simple randomization (random number method), half of the cohort was randomly assigned to the intervention group and half to the comparison group. Intervention group members were actively engaged with the campaign for 2 years through various activities. They received emails in 20 of the 24 months connecting them to campaign news and activities, five mini-surveys to inform campaign refinement, opportunities to give additional feedback via focus groups and interviews, and proactive knowledge exchange materials presenting study findings (i.e., infographics). Emails were sent using Mailchimp and espoused the tone of empathy and compassion, which were central traits of the campaign. Intervention Group participants received an additional $160 and $70, in the first and second years respectively, for their participation. Incentives were distributed in smaller amounts and often coincided with a mini-survey. At 18 months follow-up, 679 new participants were on-boarded into the intervention group for replenishment.

The five mini surveys collected feedback on a variety of topics. Feedback often focused on the knowledge needs of the Canadian Cancer Society. In year 1, the surveys asked for feedback on: 1) the campaign's initial direction, name and creative, 2) social media preferences, and 3) the experience as an intervention group member. In year 2, the surveys explored participants' 4) perceptions of quitting milestones and preferences for sharing milestones and contests and 5) feedback on the new #IamQuitting Milestone Contest. A bonus survey also occurred in Year 2 to obtain feedback about potential next steps for Smoke-Free Curious.

Control group members received no proactive engagement. They may have been exposed to campaign messaging as would any other Canadian adult person who smokes.

Both intervention group and comparison group participants received invitations to complete a baseline survey (prior to campaign launch) and follow-up surveys at 6-month intervals (conducted at 6, 12, 18, and 22 months post-campaign launch).

Intervention Type
Behavioural

Primary outcome(s)
Taking action to support smoking cessation is measured using survey questions about ordering free Nicotine Replacement kits, chatting with friends or family about quitting smoking, looking up community quit smoking supports, talking to a health professional and signing up for the First Week Quit Smoking Challenge at 6, 12, 18, and 22 months post-campaign launch.

Key secondary outcome(s)
1. Quit attempts measured using survey self-report at 6, 12, 18, and 22 months post-campaign launch
2. Engagement with monthly emails measured using e-mail analytics at 6, 12, 18, and 22 months

post-campaign launch
3. Engagement with campaign components (website etc.) measured using survey self-report at 6, 12, 18, and 22 months post-campaign launch

Completion date
31/12/2023

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria
1. From 35 to 64 years of age
2. Currently smoke cigarettes
3. Live in the province of Ontario or Quebec where the campaign was run

Participant type(s)
Other

Healthy volunteers allowed
No

Age group
Adult

Lower age limit
35 Years

Upper age limit
64 Years

Sex
All

Total final enrolment
3199

Key exclusion criteria
Does not meet the inclusion criteria

Date of first enrolment
01/08/2021

Date of final enrolment
31/12/2021

Locations

Countries of recruitment
Canada

Study participating centre
Ontario Tobacco Research Unit, University of Toronto
155 College Street
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Sponsor information

Organisation
University of Toronto

ROR
https://ror.org/03dbr7087

Funder(s)

Funder type
Government

Funder Name
Health Canada

Alternative Name(s)
Governemt of Canada, Health Canada, Santé Canada, GovCanHealth

Funding Body Type
Government organisation

Funding Body Subtype
National government

Location
Canada

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan
The datasets generated during and/or analyzed during the current study will be available upon request from Robert Schwartz (robert.schwartz@utoronto.ca)

IPD sharing plan summary

Available on request

Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
Results article		30/01/2025	31/01/2025	Yes	No
Study website	Study website	11/11/2025	11/11/2025	No	Yes