Prevalence and correlates of tobacco use, uptake of cessation resources, and intervention by providers

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Background

- Prior estimates indicate that 30% of Georgian adults are current smokers (STEPS 2010)
- 10% of youth are current tobacco smokers (GYTS 2014)
- Tobacco control measures are weak and not fully compliant with WHO FCTC
Study Aims

- To estimate tobacco use prevalence
- To identify correlates of tobacco use including socio-demographic and psychosocial factors
- To assess individual cessation attempt practices
- To examine tobacco cessation interventions provided in the primary health care context in the country
Design/Methods

- National household survey (1163 Georgian adults aged 18-65 years)
- A multi-stage, clustered sample design with stratification done by region
Results

Tobacco use prevalence and history

- Lifetime tobacco use prevalence: 43.1% (n=501)
- Current tobacco use prevalence: 30.9% (n=359)
- Mean age of first-time smoking a whole cigarette: 16.9 yrs
- Mean age of starting regular smoking: 18.7 yrs
Results

Correlates of current smoking

- Male vs female: 54.2% vs 6.5% (p=0.000)
- Mean age of initiation among males vs females: 18.4 vs. 20.5 (p=0.047)
- Urban vs rural: 32.3% vs. 29.9%
- Capital Tbilisi vs regions: 36.4 % vs. 29.1% (p=0.013)
- Peak age 35-44 years age group (38.5%)
- No differences in smoking prevalence by education, income status, or other demographic characteristics
Results

Quit attempts

- Current smoker with no plan to quit in the next 6 months: 46.7%
- Motivation to quit: 5.8 (scale of 0 = not at all to 10 = extremely)
- Confidence in quitting: 4.6 (scale of 0 = not at all to 10 = extremely)
Results

Counseling from healthcare providers

- 55.8% have seen healthcare provider for any reason
- 31.3% have had a healthcare provider talk about smoking
- Among smokers who talked to healthcare provider about smoking, 24.0% received any advice to quit and 3% were offered help in their quit attempt
- No follow up by healthcare provider was reported
- No medication prescribed for cessation (including NRT) was reported
- Less than 1% of smokers received additional information about smoking cessation services (e.g. quitline) from healthcare provider

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Conclusions

- Smoking is a significant public health problem in Georgia
- Pervasive issue among the society as a whole, with certain socio-demographic groups such as men and those living in Tbilisi, being at risk
- Smokers reported low motivation and confidence in quitting smoking
Conclusions

- Healthcare system may lack training or capacity to address smoking
- Missed opportunity to facilitate smokers’ motivation (through making recommendations to quit) or confidence (by providing support or resources to assist them)
- On a society level, great efforts need to be made to curtail this increasingly concerning tobacco use epidemic in Georgia
Thank you for your attention!