

ORIGINAL PAPER

Intention to Quit Smoking of Firefighters in Greece

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Abstract

Background: Smoking increases the risk of getting cancer, respiratory and cardiovascular diseases as well as poorer treatment outcomes for certain disorders. Fire fighters are exposed to highly toxic substances and are therefore at higher risk of suffering from related diseases with those who smoke facing an even greater risk.

Objective: The objective of this study was to examine the intention of healthy fire fighters to quit smoking in Greece.

Methodology: Three hundred fire fighters who smoke participated in this study. A structured and anonymous questionnaire was used to collect data on their intention to quit smoking.

Results: Six out of ten fire fighters (n=186) (62%) were determined to quit. In their majority, they were high rank officers (n=94) (50.8%), male (n=53) (28.6%) and aged 25-45 years old (n=156) (52%). The advantages of quitting smoking (n=271)(90.4%), the money they spend on cigarettes (n=268)(89.5%), and their concerns regarding the dangers associated with smoking on their health (n=249)(83%), as well as the previous failed attempts to quit (n=209) (69.7%) and the feeling of guilt or shame associated with smoking in the presence of other family members or friends (n=192)(64%) are the main reasons behind their intention to quit. Only six out of ten (n=182) (60.6%) would like to visit a health professional to help them to quit while approximately three out of ten (n=108) (35.9%) would agree to use an evidence-based therapy to quit smoking.

Conclusions: The high rate of firemen who wish to quit indicates the need for the provision of cessation support services. The findings of our study reflect the need for additional research focusing on working populations who wish to quit and are exposed at similar health risks.

Key Words: Smoking, firefighters, intention to quit, motivation