

A Qualitative Study on Barriers to Smoking Cessation Among Patient in Pejabat Kesihatan Daerah Kuala Terengganu (PKDKT)

Wan Noraini Wan Mahmood, BPharm (Hons)¹, Nur Sulaihah Omar, BPharm (Hons)², Nurul Liyana Samsuddin, BPharm (Hons)¹

¹Klinik Kesihatan Manir, ²Klinik Kesihatan Hiliran

ABSTRACT

Introduction: According to the National Health and Morbidity Survey 2015, about 22.8% of Malaysian population aged 15 years and above were smokers. The rate of sustained abstinence for at least six months were only 3%-5% (self-quit) and 19%-33% (opt for pharmacotherapy). Data from Quit Smoking Programme in PKDKT indicated only 31.8% of patients successfully quit smoking from 2017 to 2019. The objective of this study was to explore the barriers to smoking cessation among patients in PKDKT. **Methods:** Patients were selected from data registry of Quit Smoking Clinic in PKDKT. One-to-one interview was conducted using nine semi-structured questions. Purposive sampling was carried out until saturation point reached. The interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim, coded manually and thematically analysed using constant comparison approach. **Results:** Thirty patients were interviewed. Six-themes emerged from the data on 1) Personal and lifestyle factors; Patients lack of self-control, self-confidants, motivations and easily influenced by friends; 2) Misconception-patients misinterpreted cessation effects was harmful to their health and quality of life; 3) Side effect of quit smoking medications; including varenicline tablets, nicotine gum and patch. They experienced headache, drowsiness and insomnia; 4) Recovering from acute disease; five patients claimed they stop smoking during asthma attack and resume after exacerbation resolved; 5) Withdrawal symptoms; patients resumed smoking to eliminate intolerable withdrawal symptoms; and 6) Readiness to stop smoking. Some patients claimed they were not ready and involuntarily joined the Quit Smoking Programme. **Conclusion:** Clinicians and Quit Smoking Programme team have to tackle all identified barriers to enhance successful rate of smoking cessation.

Effect of Exposure Risk Factors on the Outcomes of COVID-19 Positive Pregnant Women Admitted to Sibul Hospital, Malaysia

Yong Sook-Min, MBBS¹, Lee Jeffrey Soon-Yit, MD¹, Toh Teck-Hock, FRCPC^{1,2}

¹Clinical Research Centre, Sibul Hospital, Sibul, Sarawak, ²Department of Paediatric, Sibul Hospital, Sibul, Sarawak.

ABSTRACT

Introduction: Pregnancy is a risk factor for severe COVID-19 disease. Vaccine program has been offered as a priority to pregnant frontliners whose jobs considered high-risk exposure. We studied how the risk exposure of COVID-19 pregnant women affects maternal and neonatal outcomes. **Methods:** We identified COVID-19 rt-PCR positive pregnant women who were admitted to Sibul Hospital from January to May 2021, who had been affected by surge of pandemic. We reviewed their case notes and collected sociodemographic information, maternal and neonatal outcomes. We compared the severity of disease and pregnancy outcomes between high and low exposure risk groups. **Results:** We identified 119 COVID-19 pregnant women; 44 (37.0%) subjects were considered high-risk exposure. None were vaccinated for COVID-19. There were no significant differences between the low- and high-risk groups for medical and sociographic factors. There was also no significant difference between the risk exposures for COVID-19 severity, intensive care admission, need for ventilation and premature delivery. For those who delivered, 45.5% (n=5) of the high-risk group delivered prematurely with an odds ratio of 15.0 (95% CI: 1.46, 155.3, p = 0.023). Otherwise, there was no significant difference in other neonatal outcomes. No neonate was tested positive for COVID-19. **Conclusion:** A significant number of low-risk COVID-19 exposure subjects in our cohort developed severe COVID-19 and equally likely to have unwanted maternal and neonatal outcomes. Thus, pregnant women are all vulnerable to develop severe COVID-19 regardless of their risks exposure. Our study finding highlights the importance of COVID-19 vaccination for all pregnant women.