

A 12MONTH STUDY OF SMOKING PREVENTION IN A PSYCHIATRIC DEPARTMENT

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Introduction: When compared to the general population psychiatric patients smoke at higher rates. In Greek psychiatric wards smoking has been "quietly" allowed up until 2011 and up to date there is no provision of nicotine dependence interventions.

Objectives: The opening of offered a unique opportunity to establish the first psychiatric ward with a clear no smoking policy.

Aim: To describe the effect of this intervention on the smoking behaviour of the inpatients.

Methods: For a 12month period we conducted a prospective study of smoking avoidance measures in the 2nd Department of Psychiatry of Attikon University Hospital in Athens. We monitored the smoking habits of 330 inpatients before admission, during their hospitalization and at discharge.

Results: From 330 patients, 170 were smokers (51.5%). 101 of them (59.4%) had made at least one effort to quit smoking in the past. Regarding diagnosis, patients with schizophrenia were smokers significantly more than patients suffering from mood disorders (83/177 vs. 56/138, $\chi^2=4.8$, $p=0.03$). Concerning the smoking habits during hospitalization, only 12 of the 170 smokers (7%) admitted or were seen to smoke in their rooms despite regulations. The mean difference (before admission/at discharge) was -21.8 cigarettes per day ($p < 0.001$).

Conclusion: Smoking avoidance measures are effective in a new psychiatric unit.