

Russian Project “Healthy Cities Without Tobacco”

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Abstract: An innovative project “Healthy cities without tobacco” was implemented to ensure the implementation of the regulations of the Federal Law No. 15-FZ at the regional and city level regarding the restriction of the spread of tobacco, the ban on tobacco smoking in public places, state and social institutions in the cities of the Russian Federation. This study presents the experience of implementing this project. The project is aimed at increasing interaction with authorities, controlling structures and active community to ensure tobacco smoking restriction in public places and institutions in 22 cities of the association of “healthy cities, districts and villages” as well as the development of local strategies for tobacco control. There are outcomes of the project: effective collaboration on control tobacco smoking on municipal level, realistic action plan on preventive measures against tobacco was created and implemented.

Key words: Medical prevention, tobacco, intersectoral cooperation, public health, Federal law, districts

INTRODUCTION

Preventive measures at the municipal, national and global levels are being developed with regard to tobacco smoking as one of the most significant risk factors for noncommunicable diseases.

The European movement “healthy cities” has a number of successful practices with regard to anti-tobacco measures at the municipal level.

The most common measure, among those described in the literature is tobacco smoking monitoring which is often combined with monitoring of alcohol consumption by young people (Istomina and Razbadauskas, 2011; Amlaev *et al.*, 2006, 2012, 2014, 2015; Amlaev and Brzezovsky, 2010). Projects of informational and educational nature are carried out often as well. For example, Viana do Castelo (Portugal) has implemented a program to inform about dangers of tobacco smoking and help those who want to quit smoking.

A similar program was implemented in Carlisle (Great Britain) (Zamaro *et al.*, 2011). Information work is conducted in the form of games and educational activities to students who are more often the target group for the prevention of tobacco smoking (Udine, Italy) (Zamaro *et al.*, 2011).

Among other projects is the effective implementation of programs to reduce tobacco smoking by pregnant women and reduce the risk of being subjected to passive tobacco smoking in families in Glasgow (United Kingdom). Educational programs recorded on DVD for family viewing are aimed at increasing parent’s motivation to quit smoking in Swansea (United Kingdom).

The most successful project is the one implemented in the northern regions of Israel which is aimed at the complete ban on tobacco smoking in four cities in Israel. An attempt to implement the transformation program of Newcastle upon Tyne (Great Britain) into a tobacco-free city within 6 years met a lot of critical feedback from its residents and only the introduction of changes in the national anti-smoking legislation made it possible to make progress in the project.

All projects implemented at the municipal level have shown that it is quite difficult to achieve stable positive changes in this sphere without changing the national legislation on tobacco smoking. In this regard, it is difficult to overestimate the Federal Law No. 15-FZ, adopted by the Government of the Russian Federation in February, 2013, “On protecting citizen’s health from exposure to tobacco smoke and consequences of tobacco consumption”. With this document, Russia has fulfilled the commitments undertaken by the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. From June, 2013 the law has gradually introduced restrictive and prohibitive measures such as prohibiting tobacco smoking in a majority of buildings and territories of education, culture, sports and healthcare institutions. However, authorities of all levels have the task of ensuring its implementation. In order to achieve a significant reduction in the prevalence of tobacco smoking, it is necessary to implement a set of measures to ensure the realization of this law on the basis of creating a broad coalition of executive and legislative authorities together with scientific, medical, pedagogical community and public organizations of the Russian Federation. At

the same time, the ability of the authorities at the local level to ensure compliance with regulations and restrictive norms of the law is limited. Regulatory authorities such as the Department of Internal Affairs, Rospotrebnadzor also, do not have sufficient capacity to ensure universal control over compliance with prohibitions and restrictions of the Federal Law No. 15-FZ.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In order to reach next goals: ensure interaction of authorities, controlling structures and community on issues of tobacco smoking restriction, monitoring of compliance with the Federal Law No. 15-FZ, to engage citizens in active anti-smoking activities and create a system of public control in cities, to develop and implement approved by city administrations action plans in 22 cities of the association to reduce prevalence of tobacco smoking, to create in each city sustainable intersectoral management groups that after appropriate training will develop action plans in their cities to reduce the prevalence of tobacco smoking and ensure their implementation in their city in the future were implemented joint project with association “Healthy cities, districts and killages”.

That institution has significant scientific potential, organizational and human resources, practical experience and political support at all levels. The association includes 22 municipalities with a total population of over 10 million people. Despite differences between cities in terms of population and socioeconomic status, they have a common approach in the implementation of social policy. Legislative and representative authorities of a city actively pursue policies aimed at strengthening public health. The cities have a formed system of interdepartmental interaction and intersectoral cooperation, great practical experience in addressing public health problems. For a long time, 10 of 22 cities of the association participate in the WHO/Europe project “Healthy cities”. The association has established stable partnerships with the offices of the WHO/Europe and the WHO/Russia, the Russian Department of the Union against Tuberculosis and Lung Diseases, the state research Center for Preventive Medicine which provide methodological support to it. During implementing this project, the cities used the information materials provided by these partners which have already proved their effectiveness in organizing media campaigns and outreach work with the public as well as assisting in the selection of qualified specialists for training politicians, journalists, and other stakeholders. Project evaluation indicators:

- Number of publications on the dangers of tobacco smoking
- Number of developed and approved local and regional action plans for tobacco control
- Number of municipal programs to reduce the prevalence of tobacco smoking
- Number of organized “Hot” lines for receiving complaints and information about violations of the Federal Law No. 15-FZ and the number of received calls
- Number of trained volunteers for individual work with target groups of teenagers and young people
- Number of politicians, journalists, civil society representatives and volunteers involved in the promotion of healthy lifestyles and quitting smoking
- Number of administrative fines for violation of compliance with the law
- Number of rentals of social advertising
- Number of NGOs involved in public control

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Organizational measures and educational activities: In March-April, 2014, 2 days working meetings were held in the North-Western (Vologda), North-Caucasian (Stavropol), Privolzhsky (Dimitrovgrad) and Siberian (Novosibirsk) Federal districts. This led to the involvement of the maximum number of representatives of political circles, spheres of business, representatives of public regulatory authorities and voluntary organizations in education and solving the problem of reducing the prevalence of tobacco smoking and to educate. At each of the four meetings the experts attracted by the association conducted training for:

- Groups of stakeholders on the planning and organization of anti-smoking activities
- Politicians, representatives of the media and public organizations on the problem of tobacco smoking
- Volunteers to promote tobacco smoking cessation and individual work with target groups and the public

In addition, the media of the 22 cities participating in the project on the ongoing basis rotated throughout the year approved by the Ministry of Health of the Russian Federation anti-smoking social videos.

Stakeholders who became members of the project working groups formed action plans to reduce the prevalence of tobacco smoking in cities, taking into account the characteristics and conditions of each city. These workshops in the districts served as a good informational occasion across the federal district to

discuss the problem of the prevalence of tobacco smoking and contributed to the public support of the Federal Law No. 15-FZ.

In each participating city of the project from June to December 2014 public monitoring of compliance with the Federal Law No. 15-FZ was organized.

Checking enterprises and companies by groups of community members as volunteers and journalists with the assistance of the administration and trade union organizations or members of the labor collective of the enterprises. Conducting raids of these groups in conjunction with regulatory authorities (Department of Internal Affairs, Rospotrebnadzor) in the city to monitor compliance with the law in public places. Organizing "hot lines" in order the public to inform regulatory authorities (Department of Internal Affairs, Rospotrebnadzor) about violations of the Federal Law No. 15-FZ.

The project activities and implementation of tobacco control strategies were carried out according to the principles and approaches of the integrated management system: process management through intersectoral group organized on the basis of the city administration, approval and support of local authorities, the implementation of tasks through a variety of agencies and regulatory authorities, businesses and the public.

Both the project's working group and partners carry out evaluation of the effectiveness of the work to reduce the prevalence of tobacco smoking and comply with the requirements of the legislation: public organizations, regulatory authorities (Department of Internal Affairs, Rospotrebnadzor), taking into account opinion of the public.

The following facts speak about the effectiveness of the project. The police of Stavropol (population of up to 500 thousand people) during the period from September, 2014 to January, 2015, compiled 1985 protocols connected to the violation of the Federal Law No. 15-FZ; In Nevinnomyssk (population of up to 200 thousand people) more than 600 protocols were compiled.

Other regulatory authorities (Rospotrebnadzor, Ministry of Emergency Situations and other organizations) implemented similar measures. Significant assistance in implementing control measures was carried out by volunteers who identified enterprises and organizations that violated regulations of the Federal Law No. 15-FZ.

The results of testing 32 public catering companies with a "Secret guest" technique serve as an example of the effectiveness of the project. In 30 of 32 randomly

selected public catering companies in Stavropol violations of the Federal Law No. 15-FZ were not detected.

CONCLUSION

As a result of the project implementation, significant progress in terms of the realization of regulations of the Federal Law No. 15-FZ was made in 22 Russian cities. The following has been achieved: working interaction of authorities, regulatory authorities, public organizations, the media and community, a system of public control of compliance with the law was established in the cities, action plans were adopted and implemented to reduce the prevalence of tobacco smoking and sustainable intersectoral management groups were established to ensure the sustainability of implemented measures.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Thus, the initiatives carried out by the local community based on intersectoral cooperation with the approval and support of local authorities with the participation of regulatory authorities, businesses and the public can be a factor for success in the fight against the tobacco epidemic, especially in the presence of an effective national anti-smoking legislation.

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