

11 June 2020

Summary of a recommendation by COHERE
Finland

Recommendation: Factors supporting lifestyle changes when using methods for providing lifestyle counselling and supporting self-management of health to reduce the risk of smoking-related diseases

At its meeting of 11 June 2020, the Council for Choices in Health Care in Finland (COHERE Finland) adopted a recommendation on factors supporting lifestyle changes when using methods for providing lifestyle counselling and supporting self-management of health to reduce the risk of smoking-related diseases.

The recommendation by COHERE Finland applies to patients who smoke but want to stop smoking although they have not been able to do so without outside help. The recommendation is targeted at both the parties responsible for organising healthcare and service providers with the aim of supporting patients to stop smoking.

Smoking significantly increases the risk of serious chronic diseases, such as cardiovascular diseases and lung diseases. Chronic diseases impair the quality of life and work ability of individuals and have a huge impact on our national economy. Their treatment also places a considerable burden on healthcare services.

By using effective lifestyle counselling methods, Finland strives to reduce the risk of patients developing such serious chronic diseases for which smoking is a risk factor.

According to COHERE Finland, **the following methods for providing lifestyle counselling and supporting self-management of health have proven to be effective** in stopping smoking: **addressing smoking, brief counselling (mini intervention) based on the 5A's model (Assess, Advise, Agree, Assist, Arrange), and a motivational discussion.** COHERE Finland also considers that these methods fall within the range of public healthcare services. No safety risks have been associated with the use of these methods.

When preparing the recommendation, efforts were made to identify the factors that help motivate patients and commit them to making lifestyle changes. It became obvious that **all effective methods have the following five components in common: 1) informing the patient, 2) setting targets, 3) drawing up a plan, 4) monitoring, and 5) providing feedback.**

COHERE Finland also considers that to achieve the effectiveness of the methods for providing lifestyle counselling and supporting self-management of health, it is necessary to ensure that:

- the method consists of the above-mentioned five components
- cooperation between different actors runs smoothly
- patients are provided with personalised care tailored to their own needs
- the method for providing support suits the patient's individual case
- the methods can be used properly
- as a rule, only methods that have proven to be effective for special groups are used to treat these groups.

With regard to a successful lifestyle counselling process, it is worth noting that both the healthcare sector and other municipal actors play an important role in promoting lifestyle counselling. Effective links should be in place between different actors, both between the actors within the healthcare sector and with actors outside



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the healthcare sector, to ensure that patients receive the sufficient support that they need and are offered opportunities to change their lifestyles.

The recommendation, the related background material and further information about service choices in healthcare are available on the COHERE Finland website: <https://palveluvalikoima.fi/en>. The Council for Choices in Health Care in Finland (COHERE Finland) works in conjunction with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, and its task is to issue recommendations on services that should be included in the range of public health services.

