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The effectiveness of the Intensive Tobacco Cessation Programme: a multi-professional approach

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Introduction: Smoking is the leading cause of preventable death in the world and smokers still find it difficult to quit smoking.

Methods: A descriptive and retrospective study was carried out to investigate the efficacy of an intensive multi-professional (doctor and nurse) smoking cessation programme. The programme consisted of 2 face-to-face appointments with both professionals and a weekly teleconsultation with the nurse for 6 weeks and was implemented in a Portuguese hospital between 2021 and 2022.

Results: Of the 200 patients included, 73% (n=146) were male with a mean age of: 51.86 (± 10.82) and 27% (n=54) were female with a mean age of: 40.80 (± 10.46). The majority (94% n=188) had previously tried to quit smoking. With our programme 87 patients (43.72%) stopped smoking. Single (47.5% n=95), double (46% n=92) or triple (6.5% n=13) therapy was used in a personalized way for each patient.

The drugs used were: varenicline 12.50% (n=25), nicotine patch 38% (n=76), cytisinicline 35% (n=70), nicotine gum 44.5% (n=89), bupropion 6% (n=12) and anxiolytics 12.5% (n=25). The Mann Whitney Test shows differences between the group that was able to quit smoking and the group that was not, regarding dependence (T. Fagestrom: lowest range mean, in those who quit smoking) but not in motivation (T. Richmond). There is a positive correlation ($p < 0.05$) with the number of cigarettes and continuing smoking, but not with age or gender.

Conclusions: The number of cigarettes and nicotine dependence influence smoking cessation but individualised pharmacological treatment, an intensive behaviour change approach and multi-professional teamwork are the key to the success of an effective smoking cessation programme.