

ABSTRACT

Background: Cigarette package is important for consumers and the tobacco industry. It is important part of the overall marketing strategy as well. There is a lot of evidence showing a causal relationship between tobacco marketing and smoking rate. Health warnings on packages are direct and important means of communication with smokers therefore the introduction of legislative measures in the field of tobacco control is needed.

Objectives: Main objectives are to complete a current overview of the results of research studies dealing with the approaching of different countries of the world in influencing smokers through packaging and to see what impacts on smokers have legislative measures relating to plain packages and picture warnings. Through this work I would like to prove the introduction of legislative measures promoting health picture warnings and plain packaging appear to be effective.

Methods: The research group consists of published scientific articles searched in the English language identified through electronic databases PubMed and subsequently analyzed. Data collection was conducted in the period from April to July 2014, relevant articles available were included. A total of 30 original articles met inclusion criteria, including 25 quantitative studies, 3 qualitative studies, 1 study with both qualitative and quantitative components, and 1 review paper: USA (n = 6), Canada (n = 3), Mexico (n = 3), Germany (n = 3), Australia (n = 2), Italy (n = 2), Norway (n = 2), United Kingdom (n = 2), China (n = 1), India (n = 1), Malaysia (n = 1), Mauritius (n = 1), Thailand (n = 1), Flanders (n = 1). Review paper summarize total of 94 studies from more than 14 countries.

Results: Pictorial health warnings on the front of the packages are an important source of health information for smokers and non-smokers, can increase health knowledge and risk perception and promote smoking cessation. The results also suggest that comprehensive warnings are effective among young people, and can help as prevention in the initiation of smoking. The color of the packaging plays an important role in the perception of risks associated with smoking as well and demonstrates further evidence based on the effectiveness and appropriateness of introducing plain package.

Conclusions: The implementation of legislative measures, supporting picture warnings on cigarette packages and plain packages of cigarettes, appears to be effective. The implementation of a plain package in the Czech Republic regarding the present state of our legislation was more than desirable and I would allowed to recommend it in relation to the obtained results.

Key words: cigarette packages - health pictorial warnings - plain packages – smokers - legislation