

ASSESSING COMPLIANCE TO SMOKE - FREE LEGISLATION IN PUBLIC PLACES OF UDUPI DISTRICT, KARNATAKA: A CROSS SECTIONAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Introduction

Tobacco is the major cause of preventable premature deaths in world. To prevent these deaths India has enacted a comprehensive tobacco control law known as cigarettes and other tobacco products act (COTPA) in 2003. But still its Enforcement and compliance is a matter of concern. Survey to study the Compliance to the act is an effective tool to measure the status of implementation of the law at various public places.

Aims

The aim of this study is to assess compliance to smoke free legislation in public places of udupi district, Karnataka.

Methodology

A cross sectional study was conducted in the month of January 2014 in udupi gram panchayat region of udupi district. The public places including hotels/restaurants/bars/shopping malls, healthcare facilities, government offices, transit stations and educational institutions were surveyed. The tool used for the study was adapted from the guide on 'Assessing compliance with smoke-free law' which was developed jointly by the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and International Union against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease.

Results

No active smoking was observed in 81.5% of the public places. But display of 'No Smoking' signage as per COTPA in public places was observed only in 7.5% of the public places. Health care facilities and educational institutions has maximum compliance with the smoke-free law while transit sites and point of sale places showed the least compliance.

Conclusions

These findings suggest high level of compliance regarding no active smoking in public places but still a high level of non-compliance to the provisions of signage under COTPA was seen, which calls for a sensitization workshop and advocacy for all the stakeholders.

KEYWORDS: Compliance, COPTA, Tobacco, Smoking, Signage