Queer Quit: A pilot study of a smoking cessation programme tailored to gay men
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Background
The prevalence of cigarette smoking among adult gay males is higher than that of heterosexuals. There is a need for interventions adapted to gay culture. We conducted a pilot study using a modified version of a British smoking intervention programme tailored to gay men in Switzerland. As the main outcome, we assessed point prevalence smoking abstinence six months following programme attendance.

Methods
Seventy gay smokers attended seven weekly sessions in groups (median size = 5) taught by gay facilitators. A quit day was set in session 3. Integral components of the intervention were: discussing nicotine replacement therapy, performing carbon monoxide tests and forming ‘quit teams’. Seven-day point prevalence smoking abstinence, mental and physical health and the frequency of alcohol and drug use were assessed at baseline, in session 7 and at a six-month follow-up.

Results
Point prevalence abstinence significantly increased throughout the study (p = .00). At six months, 20 participants (28.6%) reported smoking abstinence over the previous 7 days. We observed increases in participants’ mental health between baseline and the six-month follow-up (p = .00). Participants who dropped out during the programme or were lost to follow-up smoked more cigarettes and were more nicotine dependent than the participants who were retained throughout the study duration (p ≤ .05).

Conclusions
This smoking cessation programme for gay men produced rates of point prevalence abstinence that were similar to interventions for non-gay groups. The programme presented an opportunity for gay men to quit smoking and interact with other gay non-smokers. Implementation of this programme at a larger scale is ongoing. We will share our experiences with this implementation.

Key messages
- Homosexual male smokers expressed an interest in a tailored smoking cessation intervention.
- A smoking cessation intervention tailored to homosexual men yielded an abstinence rate of nearly 30% at a six-month follow-up.