

Title: Call for a novel approach to substance abuse prevention in Guadeloupe: Update on the TOBASCO study.

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Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest and certify that the work presented has no connection with the pharmaceutical, tobacco, alcohol, electronic cigarettes and gaming companies.

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Description and objectives

The prevalence of tobacco smoking and alcohol drinking in Guadeloupe is among the highest in the Caribbean. Although this prevalence is lower compared to mainland France, Guadeloupe suffers from a substantially greater chronic disease burden. In 2021, we launched a new study epidemiological study in Guadeloupe (TOBASCO). The purpose was to identify specific determinants of tobacco and alcohol abuse as to guide efforts for prevention and cessation. Herein, we present implementation challenges for this ongoing study as well as some preliminary results.

Material and methods

We are recruiting patients attending the addiction centres in Guadeloupe and Saint Martin ($n=6$) who were consumers of tobacco/alcohol at their initial visit. We computed descriptive statistics on the patients included in the study as of the 31st of March 2023. We conducted site visits at the different centres to ascertain potential implementation barriers in the study. We used the Exact Fisher test to assess the association between tobacco and alcohol behaviour at the initial visit, and other patient characteristics.

Results and conclusions

Our team encountered many difficulties due to logistic and administrative problems related to the Covid-19 pandemic. Training and support for field investigators was insufficient. Also, one of the initial centres was closed down definitively during that period. Of the 29 patients included since the launch in November 2022, 66% were men and the average age was 52 years. Thirty-nine percent were daily alcohol drinkers and 61% current smokers. Smoking was not associated with alcohol drinking ($p=0.680$); however, it was associated with ever cannabis use ($p=0.018$). The study is ongoing but these preliminary results are concordant with similar data on substance use among adolescents in Guadeloupe which differ from mainland France. We plan to further examine this interesting relationship with cannabis once the study is completed.