

Titre : Counter-marketing strategies in patients with alcohol use disorder : an exploratory study

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Background: Alcohol Use Disorders (AUD) are among the most prevalent mental disorders in the world. They are the leading risk factor for premature mortality and disability among 15 to 49-year-olds. Links between alcohol marketing and patterns of alcohol consumption are well defined. People with an AUD are sensitized to alcohol stimuli, and marketing strategy. This study was designed in collaboration among researchers specializing in addictive disorders, in social marketing and primary care. Its aim was to explore counter-marketing strategy in patients with AUD.

Methods: This was a multicentric study, included in a larger study exploring alcohol marketing influence in patients with AUD (study protocol : Guillou Landreat et al., 2020). This step was led in a population of patients with alcohol use disorders seeking treatment (in specialized or primary care). The main objective of the descriptive study was to measure evolution of perceived ability of patients with an AUD to control their alcohol consumption, in an intervention group compared to a control group (usual care), at 3 months of follow up. The intervention consisted in 2 motivational interviews by phone led by a nurse, including counter marketing strategy. Drinkers aged 18+ with an AUD and seeking treatment, in primary care or specialized care, were included. A descriptive analysis and a comparative analysis were carried out.

Results: N = 82 patients were included and randomized. The mean age was 48.7 years old and 67% were men. The AUD was severe for 92% of patients. 52% were included in addictive disorders services, 48 % in primary care. The comparative analysis underlined a significant difference between intervention and control group regarding the main criteria : ability perceived to control alcohol consumption. However, many limits were also identified : the sample was small, with a high proportion of lost of views, and some data were lacking.

Conclusions: Patients with AUD, defined as vulnerable, are exposed to alcohol marketing in their everyday life, and influence of this exposition is unconscious. But did not seem to identify it consciously in the descriptive step of the study. This study shows that counter-marketing strategies, as it has been theorized in inoculation theory, integrated into care of patients with AUD can be a relevant and promising approach,. These findings should to be confirmed in a study involving a larger sample.

Keywords: Advertising; Alcohol; Alcohol use disorders; counter marketing, randomized trial

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