

Editorial

Dissemination reports are concise informative reports of health-related research supported by funds administered by the Food and Health Bureau, for example, the *Health and Health Services Research Fund* (which was consolidated into the *Health and Medical Research Fund* in December 2011). In this edition, 11 dissemination reports of projects related to tobacco control, neurology, respiratory diseases, traditional Chinese medicine, and reproductive system and childbirth are presented. In particular, four projects are highlighted due to their potentially significant findings, impact on healthcare delivery and practice, and/or contribution to health policy formulation in Hong Kong.

Tobacco control in Hong Kong has been carried out since the early 1980s, and control measures in particular the indoor smoking ban have increased in intensity since 2007. There is a sizeable group of smokers who are resistant to giving up. Leung et al¹ aimed to estimate the prevalence of these hardcore smokers and identify demographic, environmental, and smoking-related factors associated with hardcore smoking. They found that the proportion of hardcore smokers increased in the period under study, indicating that a smoking habit is becoming more ingrained. The study also revealed that hardcore smokers are less likely to be aware of existing smoking cessation services. This suggests a need to strengthen the existing cessation services for the whole smoking population, in particular hardcore smokers.

As the global elderly population increases there will be an increase in degenerative changes in cognitive functioning. Lee et al² conducted a study to determine whether a computerised cognitive training programme for the elderly resulted in improved attention and working memory. Among the 383 subjects participating in the 13-week study they found that those who underwent the computerised cognitive training programme demonstrated significant improvement in sustained attention and working memory at both individual and group levels. In elderly individuals with higher computer competency,

adoption of a web-based training programme would allow self-administration at home at any time.

Obstructive sleep apnoea is a form of disordered breathing in which the upper airway closes repeatedly and intermittently during sleep. Continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) treatment provides effective relief of symptoms and prevents health-related consequences. Effective education is important to enhance CPAP use. Lai et al³ conducted a randomised controlled trial with 100 Chinese subjects with obstructive sleep apnoea and showed that a motivational enhancement programme composed of a single interview and a follow-up phone call at the initiation of CPAP treatment improved treatment adherence, even after 1 year, and led to better health outcome in terms of reducing daytime sleepiness.

Benign prostatic enlargement is a major cause of moderate-to-severe lower urinary tract symptoms among Asian men aged over 40 years. Monopolar transurethral resection of the prostate is the gold standard for surgical management. However, it is associated with the risk of transurethral resection syndrome when glycine solution is used for irrigation. Bipolar surgery of the prostate uses isotonic saline solution for irrigation and thus minimises the risk of transurethral resection syndrome. Ng et al⁴ conducted a randomised controlled trial in 168 eligible subjects comparing the two treatment modalities. They found that bipolar (saline) method achieved a shorter urethral catheter time and hospital stay than the monopolar (glycine) method. After 6 months, both methods achieved similar outcome in terms of symptoms and quality of life.

We hope you will enjoy this selection of research dissemination reports. Electronic copies of these dissemination reports and the corresponding full reports can be downloaded individually from the Research Fund Secretariat website (<http://www.fhb.gov.hk/grants>). Researchers interested in the funds administered by the Food and Health Bureau also may visit the website for detailed information about application procedures.

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