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Title: Tobacco control attitudes of Portuguese physicians: Are they role models?

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Body: Background: In 2008, Portugal implemented a partial, poorly-enforced smoking ban. In 2009, the authors carried out a survey to evaluate among Portuguese physicians: smoke-free policy (SFP) attitudes and beliefs. Methods: Questionnaire-based cross-sectional study, conducted during two main medical conferences, using a convenience-sample methodology. Sample: n=607: 62.7% female; median age 34 years; 57.6% GPs; 33.1% hospital-specialists; 9.3% young graduates; response rate >62%. Chi-squared and MacNemar tests, and Multilogistic regression (MLR) were performed. Results: Of the participants, 54% believed that SFP would reduce tobacco consumption and disease burden, and 36.7% believed that SFP would help smokers to quit. 97% reported that SHS was harmful and 34.6% believed that SHS could be eliminated by ventilation systems. The majority ($\geq 98\%$) agreed with indoor smoke-free workplaces, schools and healthcare and, to a significant lesser extent ($p < 0.001$), with smoke-free hospitality venues ($\geq 85\%$), and smoke-free private settings ($\geq 78.5\%$), and even less with healthcare and schools outdoors bans ($\geq 75.8\%$). MLR showed that age, specialty, graduate training in smoking prevention, and smoking behaviour influenced TC attitudes. Conclusions: Agreement to SFP was high, but significant lower for indoor leisure and private settings, and even lower for outdoors bans. Few physicians were aware of the public health benefits of SFP. These findings suggest that Portuguese physicians' TC attitudes and knowledge do not correlate with their status as "role models". This may contribute to the current lack of comprehensive TC policies in Portugal, and undermine social norm change. Physicians' training in TC must become a priority.