



TOBACCO-FREE *Times*

www.rctepgi.org

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Tobacco Endgame Series Edition: **Navigating the Future: Insights into Digital Innovation for Tobacco Control in India**

E-RCTC: Enhancing Tobacco Control through the AIIMS Consortium

The Resource Centre for Tobacco Control (RCTC) at the Department of Community Medicine and School of Public Health, PGIMER, Chandigarh, recognized the need for a national consortium to bolster tobacco control efforts in India. This initiative led to the formation of the 'AIIMS Consortium for Tobacco Control,' comprising 14 AIIMS institutes across the country.

A national consultation was held in New Delhi, organized in collaboration with the National Academy of Medical Sciences (NAMS) and The Union, SEA. The consultation aimed to develop a strategic framework for the consortium.

The consortium's objectives are to:

- Build the capacity of academicians and researchers from various medical and public health disciplines in tobacco control.
- Provide technical support to AIIMS in implementing tobacco control initiatives at both institutional and regional levels.
- Develop a collaborative framework for tobacco control research, policy briefs, and consultations.

Through these efforts, the consortium seeks to enhance the effectiveness of tobacco control measures across India.

Tobacco Free Times **28th Edition** Released

The 28th edition of the bi-monthly publication "Tobacco Free Times," featuring "Flavoured Tobacco Products: Trapping Young into Tobacco Addiction & Control Strategies," was released at the Regional Summit on Strengthening Effective Implementation of the National Tobacco Control Program (NTCP) in India. The summit was held in Gurugram, Haryana, organized by PGIMER, Chandigarh, with the support of The Union, SEA. The event was chaired by Ms. V. Hekali Zhimomi, Additional Secretary, MoHFW, Government of India and was graced by many dignitaries.



EDITOR'S **SPEAK**



I would like to bring your attention to the importance of our theme, "Navigating the Future: Insights into Digital Innovation for Tobacco Control in India." This 29th edition of the Tobacco Free Times explores how cutting-edge digital solutions are transforming tobacco control efforts across the country. Join us as we delve into innovative strategies and technologies that promise a healthier, tobacco-free future for India.

- Dr Sonu Goel,
E-RCTC and Professor, PGIMER, Chandigarh and Chair,
Tobacco Control Section- The Union

EXPERTS **SPEAK**



Resource center is a hub and a pool bank for tobacco control. The center is putting lot of hardwork in accumulating the notifications, orders and important material from each state of the country. I wish very best to the team for all the good work.

- Mamta Thappa,
Program Director cum State Project Manager, Tobacco Control
Program Balajee Sewa Sansthan, Uttarakhand



One stop shop! it's amazing we can go to RCTC and get to know anything with relation to tobacco and efforts towards its control.

- Tshering D Bhutia,
Chief Innovation Officer and Sr. VP - Preventive Health
Salaam Bombay Foundation, Mumbai



RCTC is providing the leadership for advancing tobacco control in India in the most comprehensive way. Further, it is also giving the due thrust to the future perspective through TEDH (The Endgame Hub) since tobacco control hasn't given the anticipated outcomes, not only in India but globally as well.

At present, an elimination of the tobacco industry through a systematic phase-out appears as the most suitable strategy to counter the tobacco menace our country is facing currently as one of top high-burden tobacco countries world over.

- Dr Rakesh Gupta,
President, Rajasthan Cancer Foundation, Jaipur, Rajasthan



PROJECT UPDATES

Regional Summit on “Strengthening Effective Implementation of the National Tobacco Control Program (NTCP) in India”



A Three-day Regional Summit on “Strengthening Effective Implementation of the National Tobacco Control Program (NTCP) in India” was held in Delhi to discuss the initiatives and to address the existing gaps and challenges in the effective implementation of NTCP. The summit was organized by the Resource Center for Tobacco Control (RCTC), Department of Community Medicine & School of Public Health at PGIMER Chandigarh and the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (The Union) South-East Asia. The summit brought together key stakeholders including, policymakers, implementers, academia, and civil society organizations of 8 northern states viz. Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi,

Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.

The discussions were held on the development of a road map for NTCP implementation in the states and mitigation of existing challenges by learning through peer states. The key areas highlighted for strengthening tobacco control were tobacco cessation services, countering tobacco industry interference, enforcement of tobacco control laws, smokeless tobacco, emerging novel tobacco products, raising taxes uniformly on tobacco products, ban on tobacco advertisement promotion and sponsorship, tackling illicit trade, regulation of tobacco products.

Driving Change: RCTC Project Team’s active Engagement at the 6TH National Conference on Tobacco or Health (NCTOH):

- **PLENARY SESSION: “ENDING THE TOBACCO EPIDEMIC: DOES TOBACCO ENDGAME HOLD SIGNIFICANCE”**

On February 17, 2024, a Plenary Session titled “Ending the Tobacco Epidemic: Does Tobacco Endgame Hold Significance” was successfully organized at Gulmohar Hall from 9:30 am to 10:30 am. The session was chaired by Dr. Sonu Goel.



- **PANEL DISCUSSION: “MULTI-SECTORAL COORDINATION FOR TOBACCO ENDGAME IN INDIA”**



A Panel Discussion on “Multi-sectoral Coordination for Tobacco Endgame in India” took place from 4:00 pm to 5:30 pm at Jacaranda. Dr. Sonu Goel, Professor of Health Management at the School of Public Health, PGIMER Chandigarh, served as the chair for this panel discussion.

PANEL DISCUSSION:

On February 18, 2024, from 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm, a Panel Discussion titled “Strengthening Commitment to Tobacco Control Through Participation of Medical Institutions” took place at Gulmohar Hall. During this session, Dr. Sonu Goel presented on “Integrating Tobacco Control within AIIMS: Brief Case Studies PGIMER and RCTC (NAMS and AIIMS).”

PRESENTATION (E-POSTER & ORAL):

E-Poster Presentation:

During the conference, an e-poster presentation will be delivered on the topic “Regulating Tobacco Sales: Navigating Challenges and Embracing Opportunities of Vendor Licensing in India” by Mr. Rajeev Kumar, Project Coordinator.

Oral Presentations:

Our team successfully delivered three oral presentations out of the project as outlined below:

1) First Oral Presentation:

Shared profound insights on “Multi-Sectoral Collaboration for Effective National Tobacco Control,” highlighting a successful case study from a high-burden tobacco state in India. Presented by Mr. Rajeev Kumar, Project Coordinator.

2) Second Oral Presentation:

Conducted a SWOT Analysis of the National Tobacco Control Program’s Institutional Framework in three states of India. This presentation was delivered by Shivangi Agarwal, Program Officer.

3) Third Oral Presentation:

Explored the “Compliance Assessment of Smoke-free Public Place legislations” in Telangana and Meghalaya, providing insights into the current state of affairs.



EXHIBITION STALL (RESOURCE CENTRE FOR TOBACCO CONTROL):

Beyond presentations, we successfully managed the exhibition stall of the Resource Centre of Tobacco Control (www.rctcpgi.org), presented by the Department of Community Medicine & School of Public Health, PGIMER Chandigarh.

Our stall became a hub for meaningful connections with experts at national, state, and district levels, alongside representatives from national and international organizations, civil society, and academia. A tremendous opportunity to exchange ideas and insights for collective efforts in advancing tobacco control initiatives.



RCTC Project Team’s active Engagement at the 68th Annual National conference of IPHACON 2024 at Manali, Himachal Pradesh

- **Plenary Session titled “How can Medical Colleges contribute to advancing Tobacco Control in India” was successfully organized:**

On March 17, 2024, a Plenary Session titled “How can Medical Colleges contribute to advancing Tobacco Control in India” was successfully organized in 68th Annual National IPHACON 2024 from 15th – 17th March 2024. The session was chaired by Dr. Ashok Bhardwaj, Chairman - National Task Force on National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme, India, and Organizing Chairperson, 68th National IPHACON and Dr. Rana J Singh, Director - South-East Asia, Vital Strategies, Dr Sonu Goel, Professor, Dept of Community Medicine & School of Public Health, PGIMER, Chandigarh moderated the session, which included expert panelists Dr. Rakesh Kakkar (AIIMS, Bathinda), Dr. Kishore Yadav Jothula (AIIMS, Bibi Nagar), and Dr. G. Jahnvi (AIIMS Deoghar). Over 100 delegates participated in the session.



- **Release of 6th AIIMS Consortium of Tobacco Control Report:**

The 6 Month activity report on AIIMS Consortium of Tobacco Control was released during Annual National IPHACON 2024. Various public health experts participated in the release event, which included....



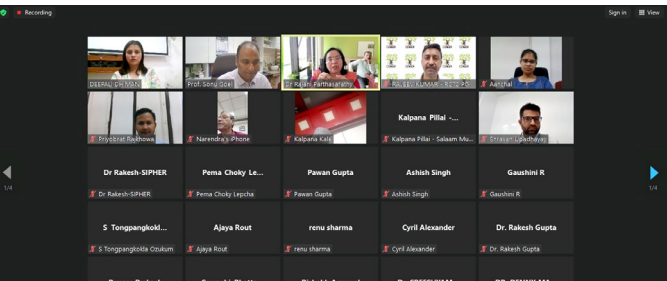
- **Exhibition Stall – Resource Centre for Tobacco Control (RCTC), PGIMER Chandigarh:**

The exhibition stall of the Resource Centre for Tobacco Control (RCTC), was showcase during 68th Annual National IPHACON 2024. The conference was attended by over 1200 delegates, primarily medical professionals, from across the country. The exhibition stall received approximately 400 visits from professionals who interacted with our experts regarding collaboration with RCTC, provided feedback, and expressed interest in participating in RCTC activities.



- **National webinar on “Harnessing Digital Innovation for Tobacco Control in India”**

The National webinar titled “Harnessing Digital Innovation for Tobacco Control in India” took place online at Zoom on 28th March 2024 . It was organized by Resource Centre for Tobacco Control (E-RCTC), PGIMER, Chandigarh. The webinar aims to convene renowned experts in the field of tobacco control to explore innovative approaches and strategies for leveraging digital innovations in our fight against tobacco/nicotine consumption. We seek to raise awareness among stakeholders regarding the challenges posed by digital platforms in promoting tobacco/ nicotine products and to devise actionable strategies to counter these influences effectively.



One-to-one meetings:



A series of meetings regarding the project were held in the month of March 2024. Notable discussions included an online meeting with NAMS task force members (dated 6TH March 2024), AIIMS Consortium members (3rd March 2024) and physical meeting with public health speakers key during 68th IPHACON 2024 at Manali, Himachal Pradesh (dated 15th -17th March 2024).





Navigating the Future:

Insights into Digital Innovation for Tobacco Control in India

Tobacco control is a critical issue in India, given the high prevalence of tobacco use and its associated health risks. Traditional methods of tobacco control, while effective to some extent, often face challenges in reaching and engaging a diverse population across the country.

This is where digital innovation steps in as a game-changer. Digital innovation in tobacco control encompasses the use of technology, such as mobile apps, online platforms, and data analytics, to implement, monitor, and enhance tobacco cessation and prevention efforts. These innovations leverage the widespread use of smartphones and internet connectivity

to reach a large number of users, personalize interventions, and collect real-time data for continuous improvement.

In this newsletter, we aim to highlight the various digital innovations in tobacco control that are making a significant impact in India. These innovations not only facilitate access to tobacco cessation tools but also empower users with knowledge, support, and motivation throughout their quitting journey. By showcasing these digital initiatives, we hope to inspire and encourage efforts towards a tobacco-free India, aligning with national and global tobacco control goals.

Tobacco Monitoring Application Chhattisgarh

In a groundbreaking move towards combating the adverse effects of tobacco, the state government of Chhattisgarh has spearheaded a digital revolution with the introduction of the Tobacco Monitoring App (TMA). This innovative mobile application aims not only to raise awareness but also to save lives by curbing tobacco consumption across the state.

One of the key features of the TMA is its restricted access, ensuring that only authorized personnel, including enforcers and educational institutions, can utilize its functionalities after due verification by district and state nodal officers. This approach not only maintains security but also ensures that the app is used effectively by those recognized by the government for tobacco control initiatives.

The app's features are tailored to address different aspects of tobacco control. The COTPA (Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act) module empowers enforcers to report and monitor tobacco-related violations efficiently. On the other hand, the ToEFI (Tobacco-Free Educational Institute) module streamlines certification processes for educational institutions, making it easier for schools to comply with anti-tobacco regulations.

Despite initial challenges, the TMA has witnessed remarkable

adoption across all 36 districts of Chhattisgarh. Over 7000 schools have signed up for ToEFI certification within a year, showcasing the app's widespread impact and accessibility, even in remote areas. The app's success hinges on continuous training programs and streamlined approval processes at district and state levels, ensuring that stakeholders are equipped to utilize its full potential.

The journey of implementing TMA has been marked by challenges that the state had to overcome with strategic planning and collaboration. Challenges such as the lack of available human resources at the district and state levels, insufficient interdepartmental coordination, and the initial hesitancy towards digital modes of operation were carefully addressed during the app's development phase. Collaborative efforts with partners like the APHAL Foundation proved instrumental in refining the app's features to meet the state's specific needs.

Looking ahead, key recommendations such as faster action by district nodal officers, enhanced training support, and improved approval workflows will further strengthen the TMA's impact on tobacco control efforts. By leveraging digital innovations like the TMA, Chhattisgarh sets a commendable example for effective public health interventions through technology-driven solutions.

ToEFI Interface makes "ToEFI" certification easier



Tobacco Monitor Application Tamil Nadu

The Tobacco Monitor App represents a significant step forward in empowering individuals to combat tobacco use and fostering collaboration between civil society and government entities. Recognizing the critical need for unified efforts in tobacco control, particularly in light of limited enforcement resources in many areas, the app was developed to bridge the gap between various government departments and encourage




their active participation in tobacco control activities mandated by COTPA regulations. Accessible via the Play Store, among the states in districts, the app allows users to report violations and engage in various tobacco-related activities, such as verifying schools for ToFEI certification, participating in children advocacy through the CAT section, and accessing resources for quitting tobacco. Currently linked with the WHO portal for cessation support, the

WHAT IS IT?

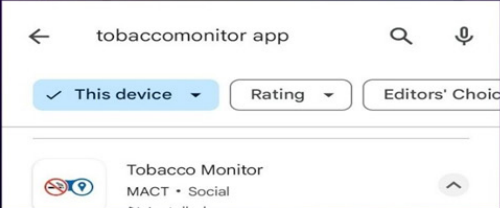
It is an android app where you can acquire information about the latest happenings related to tobacco eradication, regulations and cessation give complaints on tobacco and tobacco industry related violations

Step 1:

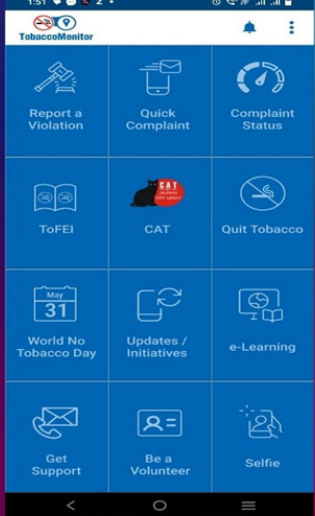


<http://tobaccomonitor.co.in>

Step 2:



Step 3:



English and Assamese

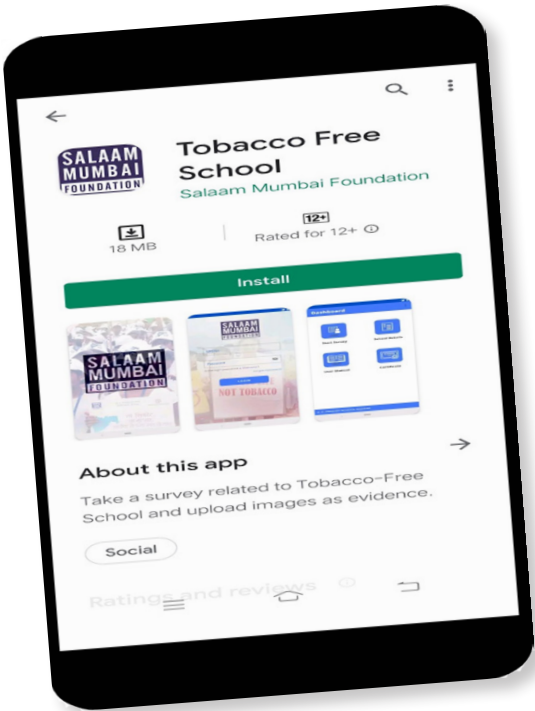
app also facilitates legal actions against media for smoking or tobacco-related violations. The impact of the app is evident in recent successes, including the seizure of significant quantities of e-cigarettes and related products worth 30 lakh rupees, thanks

to actionable complaints raised through the platform. As the app continues to evolve, efforts are underway to enhance the quit tobacco database and broaden its reach in combating tobacco use comprehensively.

Tobacco-Free School Application Maharashtra

The Tobacco-Free School (TFS) Application, introduced in 2015 to meet the Tobacco-Free Educational Institution (ToEFI) criteria, has seen significant growth across 11 states, establishing itself as a crucial instrument for implementing these standards. Available in Hindi, English, and Marathi, the application can be customized to support additional languages as needed. Primarily used in Maharashtra's 34 districts, the app simplifies the process of meeting the 9 ToEFI criteria for schools. Upon completing these criteria within the app, schools initiate a backend review by the team to ensure adherence to guidelines. Schools receive guidance for any necessary corrections, facilitating their transition to becoming tobacco-free institutions.

With support from the Maharashtra government, over 110,000 schools are actively utilizing the app, with 52,020 schools progressing towards tobacco-free status and 37,406 already declared as such. Endorsed by both the health and education departments of Maharashtra, the app has gained recognition as a reliable monitoring tool, and its adoption is spreading to states like Gujarat, West Bengal, and selectively in Rajasthan.



STOP Tobacco Application– State tobacco cell, Karnataka

The STOP Tobacco App was designed primarily to involve the community in overseeing COTPA Compliance and activating the COTPA Enforcement Mechanism from State to route, thereby guaranteeing a 100% compliance rate and fostering a Smoke-Free, Tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship (TAPS) free environment to fulfill the vision of a Tobacco-Free Generation. An initial concept note emphasized the need for an app to monitor COTPA compliance and collect real-time data, resulting in the development of a user-friendly app with essential features to promote community engagement in tobacco control efforts. After its successful trial in 10 districts of Karnataka in 2019, the app expanded to cover all 31 districts by 2022. An important update included the integration of instant feedback mechanisms for complainants following enforcement actions, addressing concerns about transparency. The app's key functionalities include public registration of COTPA violation cases, reporting WHO FCTC Article 5.3 violations, and providing access to a list of TCC counselors with their contact details. Through SMS, the app shares action taken reports with complainants, reflecting achievements such as 500 downloads, registration, and resolution of 86 cases,

highlighting the need for increased promotion. As a government-owned initiative operating in Karnataka, the app's success suggests its potential adoption by other states or international bodies.



MIS reporting- NTCP by MoHFW

The Management Information System under NTCP (MIS- NTCP) is a web-based reporting platform introduced in May 2021, with multiple training sessions held nationwide to ensure its implementation. The system operates in three basic levels: data originates from district tobacco control cells, responsible for gathering data from various program activities at district and block levels. Reporting occurs quarterly through the management system, with submissions going to the state tobacco control cell for review. The state cells oversee and verify district and block data before reporting their state-level activities to the MIS portal. All indicators are reported from district to national levels, facilitating quarterly program monitoring and yearly national reviews based on verified data. This reporting platform extends to the district level, providing insights for targeted enforcement activities and enabling authorities to strengthen processes.

The strengthened adoption of MIS is credited to guidance from

the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, with over 52 online and offline training sessions conducted nationwide for NTCP staff and civil society partners supporting MIS implementation. By 2023-2024, 451 districts were covered, 703 NTCP officials were trained, and technical support was provided to over 90 districts. Currently, more than 95% of districts are reporting data, with around 705 districts reporting in the last fiscal year.

Key outputs of MIS include the MIS dashboard, an extension for effective NTCP activity dissemination and public access to state-wise activities. MIS has improved five key domains: efficient reporting, data quality, single-platform data insights, technology-driven reviews, and evidence-based national/state reviews for the tobacco control program. Some states are using MIS data to evaluate district performance, and ongoing efforts aim to enhance MIS's user-friendliness, integrate additional tobacco control dimensions like the National Tobacco Quitline, and incorporate real-time indicators beyond state-owned applications.

Government of India

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**NATIONAL TOBACCO CONTROL PROGRAMME**

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#COVID 19 infection

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masala for a safer and better health**

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#Unite2FightCorona**

TO QUIT TOBACCO, CALL 1800 112 356 (TOLL FREE) OR GIVE A MISSED CALL AT 011-22901701

*Note: Map not to scale



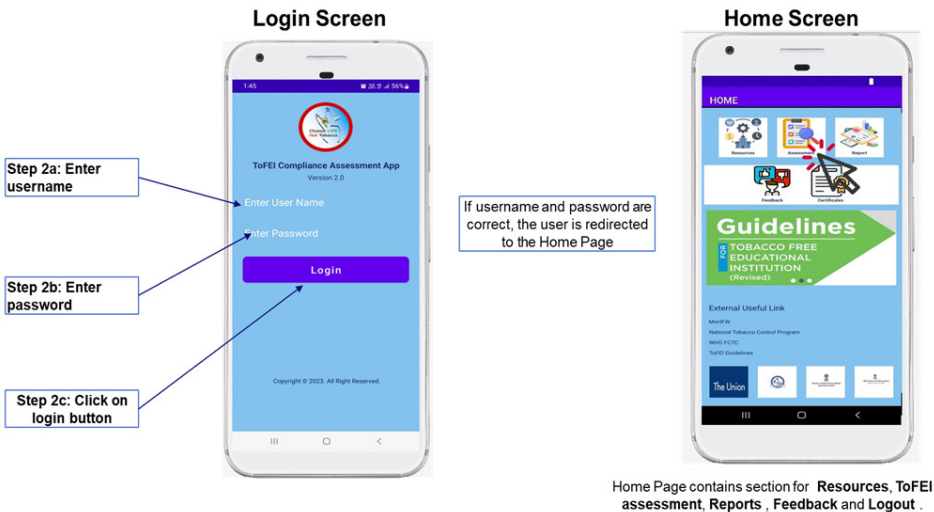
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ToFEI compliance assessment Application by Vital Strategies

A mobile-based monitoring system offers a practical solution to enhance the implementation of ToFEI guidelines and support educational institutions in becoming tobacco-free. The National Tobacco Control Program (NTCP) includes targeted efforts to promote “Tobacco-Free Educational Institutions,” with detailed guidelines featuring nine indicators issued in 2019. The ToFEI Compliance Assessment mobile app was introduced to expedite the monitoring process and enhance transparency in schools’ compliance with TOFEI guidelines. It encompasses all nine criteria used to assess ToFEI compliance and enables real-time capture of signage and violations within schools. Moreover, a real-time dashboard displays the ToFEI status of schools at the district level, facilitating improved monitoring and evaluation. By utilizing the application, schools that score above 90% receive a certificate for ToFEI compliance.

Additionally, the app offers crucial information such as details on ToFEI guidelines, COTPA 2003, WHO FCTC documents, and other pertinent links. It also includes a ToFEI compliance monitoring dashboard accessible at admin, state, and district levels.



CanCare- Tobacco Cessation Application Haryana

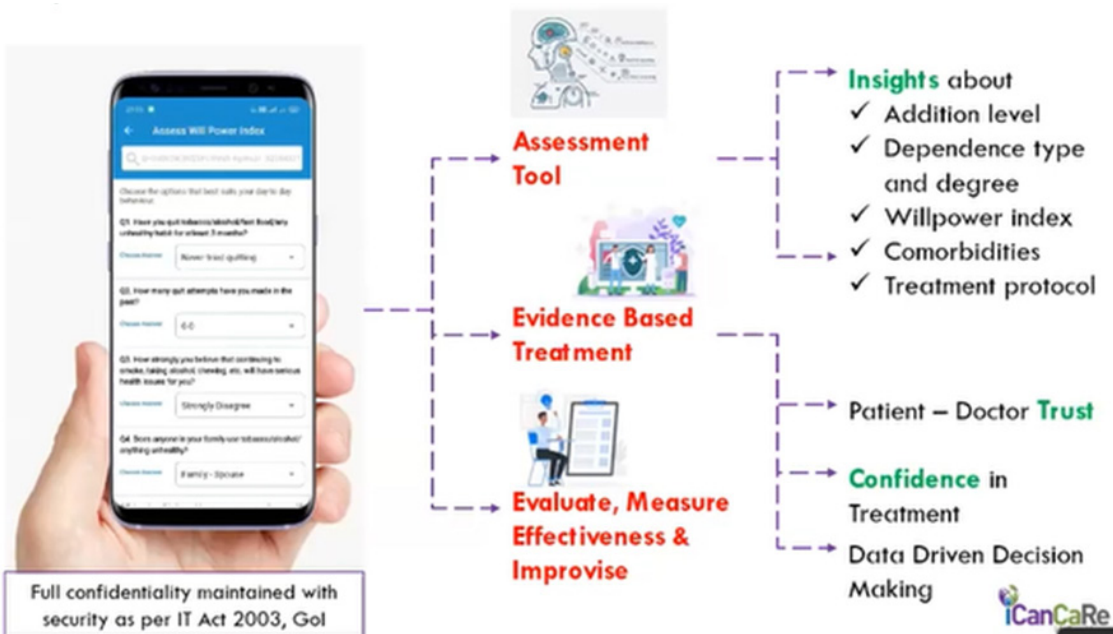
India's only cessation app provides medically validated, scientifically sound, and digital tobacco cessation services to individuals, incorporating healthcare professionals, counselors, and primary healthcare providers. It aids in brief interventions, quit plan development, and guides users through their tobacco cessation journey. The app offers a range of solutions, serving as a comprehensive platform covering all stages of tobacco de-addiction, both online and offline. Users can self-assess addiction levels, dependence types, quantify willpower, assess comorbidities, and access treatment protocols and medical services.

tracking of tobacco intake, challenges, and concerns faced by users. Through personalized interventions, including allopathic and home-based solutions, users overcome hurdles and ultimately achieve tobacco-free status. Implemented successfully at Max Specialty Hospital in Ghaziabad, the app has aided over 216 tobacco users in quitting over three years.

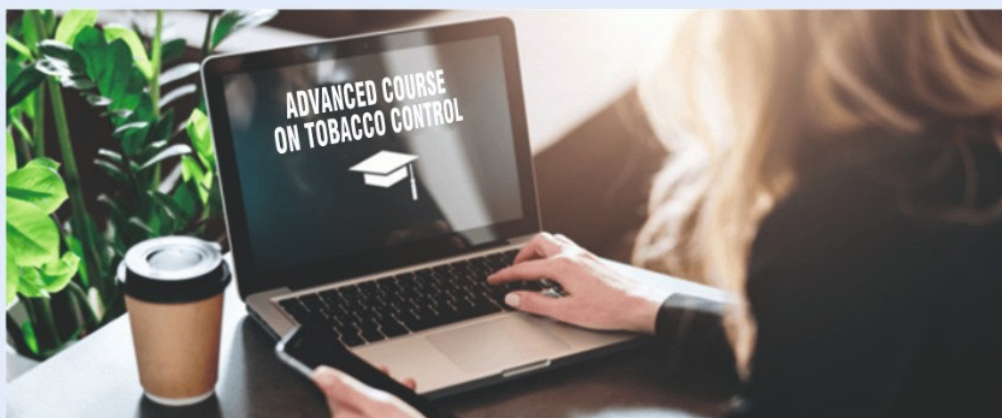
Additionally, doctors across the country, especially certified Tobacco Cessation Specialists, utilize the app to achieve high success rates. The app's features include digital tracking, record maintenance, and a 360-degree approach encompassing motivation, therapy, management, and medications. It also provides access to blog articles for holistic support.

The app's evidence-based treatment plans are digitally tailored to each user's progress, simplifying their journey with different strategies over time. This approach enhances patient-doctor relationships, builds confidence in the treatment process, evaluates effectiveness, and integrates newer strategies seamlessly. Quantitative and qualitative assessments guide pharmacotherapy or behavioral interventions.

The app's structured journey involves follow-ups, interventions, and



Excited to announce 4th Cohort of **ADVANCED COURSE ON TOBACCO CONTROL**



Benefits

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- Build the knowledge and skills in tobacco control.
- Create innovative strategies for improving the ways to tobacco reduction.
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Imperial Brands expecting higher profits after raising tobacco prices



Tobacco giant Imperial Brands has said that their profits for the first half of the financial year are expected to be higher on the back of strong pricing and sales of products such as vapes.

Source: <https://www.business-live.co.uk/enterprise/imperial-brands-expecting-higher-profits-28960907>



Tobacco consumption leading to an alarming rise in Head and Neck Cancer, experts reveal.

India is grappling with a significant burden of head and neck cancer, constituting a majority of global cases. Particularly vulnerable are the underprivileged sections of the society, notably workers and labourers, due to the rampant tobacco consumption. The importance of preventive programs to detect the disease early was emphasized at the 22nd annual RGCON 2024, themed 'Head and Neck Cancer: Bridging the Gap from Cure to Survivorship', hosted by the Rajiv Gandhi Cancer Institute and Research Centre (RGCIRC).

Source: <https://www.financialexpress.com/healthcare/news-healthcare/tobacco-consumption-leading-to-alarming-rise-in-head-and-neck-cancer-experts-reveal/3429566/>

No Smoking Day: Government of India urged to remove designated rooms in hotels, airports

On the occasion of No Smoking Day, doctors, cancer victims and hotel associations urged the government to remove designated smoking rooms in hotels, restaurants and airports to protect people from second-hand smoke.

While appreciating the government for initiating the process to amend COTPA 2003 and setting a target of making India 100 percent smoke free, they appealed for immediate removal of the current provision that permits smoking areas.

Source: <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/no-smoking-day-govt-urged-to-remove-designated-rooms-in-hotels-airports-101710325016831.html>



Rampant violation of anti-tobacco laws in 4 cities

A survey conducted by VHA and the Tobacco Cessation Clinic at King George's Medical University (KGMU) has uncovered violations of the Cigarette and Other Tobacco Product Prohibition Act (COTPA) in four cities across Uttar Pradesh - including Lucknow, Kanpur, Gorakhpur, and Gautam Budh Nagar.

A total of 205 locations, including hotels, restaurants, and resto-bars, were found to be flouting COTPA regulations. Shockingly, 13% of hotels, 11% of restaurants, and a significant 24% of resto-bars were discovered to have patrons smoking inside the premises, thereby subjecting others to harmful second-hand smoke.

Source: Anti-Tobacco Laws: Rampant Violation of Anti-Tobacco Laws in 4 Cities - Latest News | Lucknow News - Times of India (indiatimes.com)



Govt allows tobacco cos to fill their monthly returns through special procedure till May 15

The government has extended the deadline for implementation of special procedure for registration and monthly return filing of manufacturers of pan masala, gutkha and similar tobacco products till May 15. Earlier in January, the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) had announced the introduction of a new registration and monthly return filing procedure effective April 1, 2024.

Source: <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/govt-extends-till-may-15-implementation-of-spl-registration-return-filing-for-pan-masala-gutkha-cos/articleshow/109215054.cms>



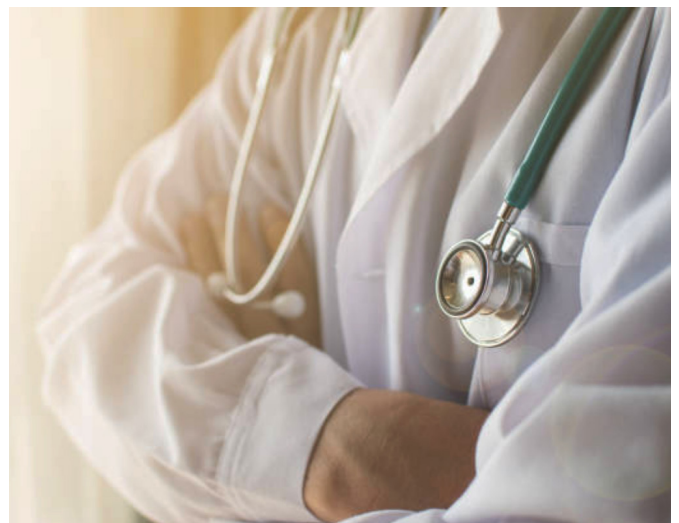
World TB Day: Tobacco smokers at higher risk of developing tuberculosis, say experts

Tobacco smokers are at a higher risk of developing tuberculosis and experiencing more severe forms of the disease, experts said. Additionally, exposure to second-hand smoke can worsen tuberculosis (TB) outcome and hinder treatment effectiveness, the experts said as they emphasised the urge need for strengthening tobacco control laws to combat this dual threat.



Source: <https://health.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/industry/world-tb-day-tobacco-smokers-at-higher-risk-of-developing-tuberculosis-say-experts/108734095>

Why India is seeing a rising trend of disease



Increased stress in life and a sedentary lifestyle combined with a spike in consumption of junk food, smoking tobacco, and alcohol is behind the surging cases of diseases in India, said experts.

Source: <https://theshillongtimes.com/2024/04/09/why-india-is-seeing-a-rising-trend-of-diseases/>

Man held with banned tobacco products of Rs 5 lakh in Palghar

A 30-year-old man from Dahanu, Palghar, was apprehended by law enforcement officials after they discovered prohibited tobacco products worth Rs 5.06 lakh in his possession on the Mumbai- Ahmedabad highway in Maharashtra's Palghar district.

Source: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/thane/man-held-with-banned-tobacco-products-of-rs-5-lakh-in-palghar/articleshow/109305692.cms>



10,000 kg counterfeit tobacco hidden in potato sacks seized, six arrested

Noida police have nabbed six people of a gang for allegedly being involved in the sale of counterfeit tobacco in south Indian states such as Karnataka and Kerala. The accused, were intercepted by cops while transporting the illegal substances to Pushta Road.

Source: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/noida/10000kg-counterfeit-tobacco-hidden-in-potato-sacks-seized-six-arrested/articleshow/109176197.cms>

Tobacco use declines despite tobacco industry efforts to jeopardize progress

The tobacco trends report shows that globally 150 countries are successfully reducing tobacco use. Brazil and the Netherlands are seeing success after they implemented MPOWER tobacco control measures, with Brazil making a relative reduction of 35% since 2010 and the Netherlands on the verge of reaching the 30% target.

Source: <https://www.paho.org/en/news/16-1-2024-tobacco-use-declines-despite-tobacco-industry-efforts-jeopardize-progress>



New Tobacco Control Measures in Russia

Russia has strengthened state control over the production and circulation of tobacco and nicotine-containing products, effective March 1. The Federal Service for Control of Alcohol and Tobacco Markets, Rosalkogoltabakcontrol, will now monitor production and circulation of tobacco, suppressing illegal production and trafficking of products and monitoring compliance with licensing and mandatory requirements during production supply, purchase and transportation.

Source: <https://tobaccoreporter.com/2024/03/04/new-tobacco-control-measures-in-russia/>



Australia's restrictive vaping and tobacco policies are fuelling a lucrative and dangerous black market

Australia currently has the most restrictive tobacco and vaping policies in the developed world. Australian smokers are taxed at one of the highest rates among comparable nations, with taxes set to further increase at rate of 5% per year. Meanwhile, Australia is the only country to have a prescription model for accessing vaping products.

Source: <https://theconversation.com/australias-restrictive-vaping-and-tobacco-policies-are-fuelling-a-lucrative-and-dangerous-black-market-225279>

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