

# **A RANDOMISED CONTROLLED TRIAL (RCT) EVALUATION OF THE ‘DEAD COOL’ SMOKING PREVENTION PROGRAMME IN SCHOOLS**

**Thurston, A.,<sup>1</sup> Dunne, L.,<sup>1</sup> Miller, S., Gildea, A.,<sup>1</sup> Kee, F.,<sup>2</sup> Craig, N.<sup>1</sup> and Stark, P.<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Centre for Evidence and Social Innovation, Queen’s University Belfast

<sup>2</sup> UKCRC Centre of Excellence for Public Health, NI, Queen’s University Belfast

## **Abstract**

This randomised controlled efficacy trial aimed to explore the impact of the ‘Dead Cool’ smoking prevention programme, developed by Cancer Focus NI. ‘Dead Cool’ is a 3-4 hour programme designed to be used by teachers with Year 8 students and comprises four lesson plans and an accompanying DVD. The programme logic model is underpinned by Theory of Planned Behaviour. The main aim of the programme is to prevent young people from starting to smoke. The intervention was implemented in 20 post primary school settings. Selected schools included those from selective/single sex/coeducational, rural and urban schools were represented in the school sample. Outcome measures include self-reported behaviours, monitoring of Carbon Monoxide (CO) in exhaled breath and focus groups designed to assess implementation fidelity and opinions on efficacy in intervention schools and explore the ‘counterfactual’ interventions in control schools. Results showed that young people who had received the programme were less likely to start smoking in Year 8 and less likely to express intention to smoke than their control group counterparts. Teachers and students reported that they enjoyed the resources. These findings have important implications for the development of smoking prevention programmes in schools.