Developing an online training program for integrating smoking cessation to the oncology practice

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Conclusion
Data from the proposed study will inform improvements to the design of the eLearning program for tobacco cessation counseling targeting cancer care providers, and will also inform our assessment of whether the chosen study sites, recruitment criteria, measures, and operational strategies will enable subsequent multicenter randomized controlled trials in Latin American cancer centers. At the same time, this eLearning program will create a cadre of cancer care providers able to provide basic smoking cessation counseling services within their own practice, capable to act as “local champions” for delivering tobacco cessation interventions during cancer treatment and survivorship.

Introduction
Cancer diagnosis provides a teachable moment during which healthcare providers can offer patients cessation counseling. During this period, patients are highly motivated to achieve recovery and the prevention of further disease. Interventions based on a brief smoking cessation message (3 minutes or less) from cancer care providers have been shown to effectively change smoking behavior in cancer patients and/or survivors, significantly improving survival time, efficacy of cancer treatment, and overall quality of life. Unfortunately, smoking cessation is not a standard part of cancer care in many Latin American countries. This is most likely due to lack of clinician training and access to cessation resources.

Objective
The long-term goal of Project STOP is to change tobacco culture and norms in three major cancer centers in Brazil (Barretos Cancer Hospital), Colombia (National Cancer Institute), and Peru (National Institute of Neoplastic Diseases) by integrating brief tobacco counseling into the oncology practice.

Methods
We propose: 1) To develop and test the feasibility of a virtual training program on brief tobacco counseling specifically designed for Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking cancer care providers, and 2) To linguistically/culturally tailor and test a smartphone application designed to assist these professionals in providing effective tobacco counseling and treatment to their patients. The bilingual program will target 90 cancer care providers and will include an online course followed by a series of monthly virtual meetings where case presentations and engaging discussions will reinforce recently acquired knowledge and skills, while providing opportunities for scientific publications. Continuous evaluations via online surveys will assess course content and learning outcomes (knowledge, attitudes, and practices).

Current Development/Expected outcomes
In April 2018, the first cohort of 30 Peruvian cancer care providers were enrolled. The Colombian cohort is expected to initiate in May 2018. IRB approval in Brazil is still pending.

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