

Evaluation of Smoking Cessation Interventions among Incarcerated Individuals

Insights from National Taiwan University Hospital Yunlin Branch

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Introduction

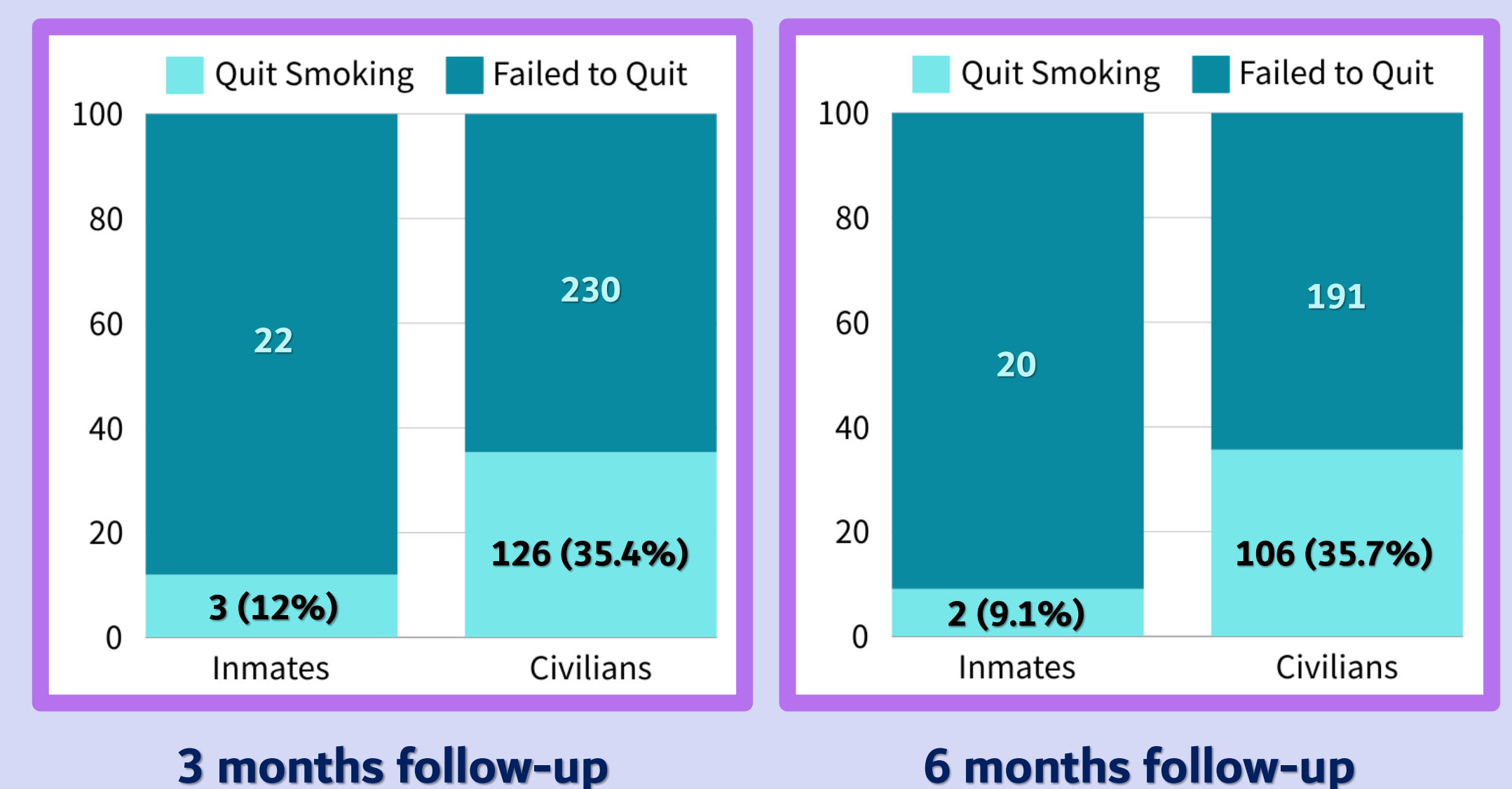
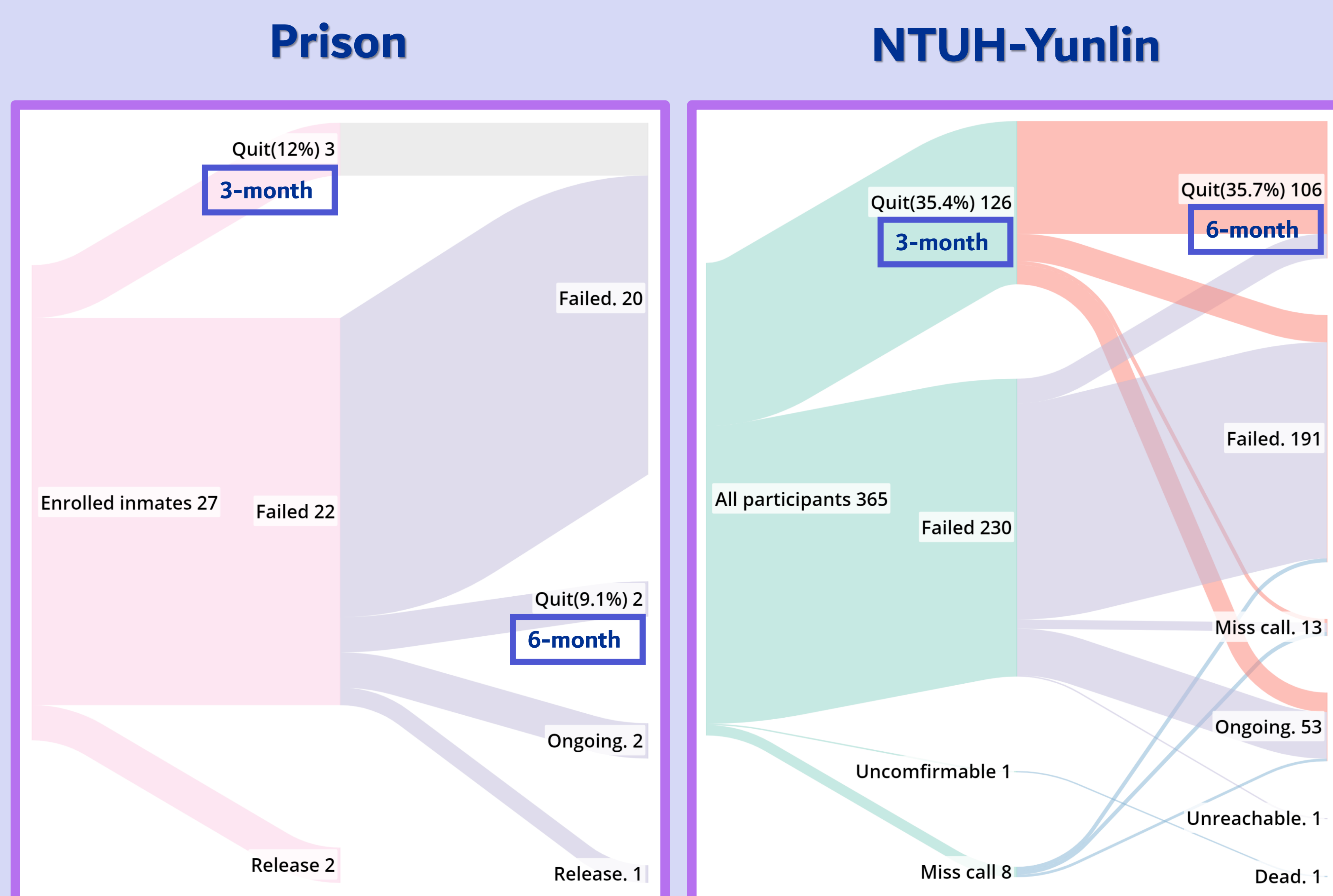
Smoking cessation is a pivotal issue in public health. When focusing on the prison system, it becomes even more important because of enormously higher smoking prevalence among the prison inmates than the general population. Inmates who are habitual smokers face numerous challenges in an attempt to quit smoking, e.g. high stress, limited entertainment, lack of peer recognition and mutual support, poor access to the professional guidance and medical resources.

National Taiwan University Hospital Yunlin Branch collaborates with Yunlin Prison to provide medical services, including smoking cessation support through the medications use. Our goal is to promote the inmates' health and facilitate their reintegration into society after release. This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of smoking cessation among inmates to inform tailored intervention strategies.

Methodology

In Yunlin Prison, a smoking cessation clinic administered bupropion 150 mg tablets to aid cessation. Inmates did not receive formal cessation education from our smoking cessation educators. Cessation success rates at three and six months in 2023 were compared to male civilians (who receiving bupropion therapy at the smoking cessation clinic in National Taiwan University Hospital Yunlin Branch) using Chi-square tests.

Results



| | 3 months | 6 months |
|--------------------|----------|----------|
| χ^2 | 5.7083 | 6.4715 |
| degrees of freedom | 1 | 1 |
| p value | 0.0169 | 0.0110 |
| Yates' χ^2 | 4.7115 | 5.3382 |
| Yates' p value | 0.0300 | 0.0209 |

Conclusions

Smoking cessation success rate among inmates receiving pharmacological treatment is significantly lower than those among the civilians. In addition to the aforementioned environmental barrier, the lack of comprehensive smoking cessation education may also be a key factor.

Incarcerated individuals should not be deprived of their right to health. Smoking cessation not only promotes health but may also help reduce the comorbidity of substance abuse. Developing a prison-specific smoking cessation model tailored to local needs is a critical task for health-promoting hospitals. We hope that the insights gained from this study can serve as a reference for other health-promoting hospitals.