



THE IBERO-AMERICAN NETWORK FOR TOBACCO CONTROL (RIACT)

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The Ibero-American Network for Tobacco Control was created in 2005 as a result of an agreement between Ministers of Health from Ibero-American Countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, Panama, among others).

Brazil was designated by the Ibero-American Ministers of Health to coordinate this network and the National Cancer Institute (INCA) is the body in charge of its coordination. The Brazilian Ministry of Health launched the RIACT during the activities of the World No Tobacco Day in 2007.

Its goal is to promote the integration of governmental institutions responsible for tobacco control in Ibero-American countries. This network seeks for the adoption of common tobacco control strategies in a coordinated manner. Its work is based on needs assessment and takes into account countries' priorities. In order to strengthen tobacco control national measures, plans and programs, it promotes experience exchange and mutual cooperation.



This way, RIACT accomplishes the obligations of FCTC articles 20 and 21, which determine the adoption of measures that promote scientific and technical cooperation and communication of information.

The network already has a webpage where its members can post news and information about tobacco control actions developed in those countries. Experience exchange and discussion of relevant themes are held through electronic mail, facilitating integration.

In 2008, INCA held the 1st Seminar of RIACT in Brazil – Promoting Tobacco Free Environments. This event was an opportunity to gather, for the first time, most of the participants and to present the actions developed in countries and Brazilian states to protect people from exposure to tobacco smoke. As a result of this meeting, the members of RIACT signed a letter of recommendations to the Ministers of Health suggesting measures to establish a comprehensive ban on advertising, promotion and sponsorship; to strengthen price and tax politics to reduce the demand for tobacco; and to implement effective legislative measures for protection from exposure to tobacco smoke.

The experience in coordinating RIACT shows that it is an important advance in the tobacco control policy in this region and a great tool to strengthen FCTC's implementation in those countries. It is also a great opportunity to increase the commitment of governments to prioritize tobacco control in Ibero-American countries and to include it in the public health agenda.