

PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS

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Welcome to this special edition of Public Health News. The aim of this newsletter is to provide partners with the latest developments from the local Public Health Team. Previous editions are now available on the West Cheshire Together website at http://www.westcheshiretogether.org.uk/strategic_themes/health_and_wellbeing.aspx We hope that you find the information in this briefing useful.



Julie Webster
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SPECIAL EDITION: Tobacco Control

National Context

Tobacco use remains one of our most significant public health challenges. Rates of smoking have declined over the past decades, but 21 per cent of adults in England still smoke and smoking prevalence has fallen little since 2007. We need to take new action to drive smoking rates down further.



Smoking is the primary cause of preventable illness and premature death, accounting for 81,400 deaths in England in 2009. In England, deaths from smoking are more numerous than the next six most common causes of preventable death combined i.e. drug use, road accidents, other accidents and falls, preventable diabetes, suicide and alcohol abuse.

Smoking rates are much higher in some social groups, including those with the lowest incomes. These groups suffer the highest burden of smoking-related illness and death. Smoking is the single biggest cause of inequalities in death rates between the richest and poorest in our communities. Tackling tobacco use is central to realising the Government's commitment to improve the health of the poorest, fastest.

Local Context

It is estimated that around 20% of adults in Cheshire West and Chester smoke. This is slightly lower than the national average and equates to approximately 54,000 smokers (aged 18+) living in the authority. There were approximately 210 smoking-attributable deaths per 100,000 adults aged over 35 in 2007-09. This is similar to the national average and equates to approximately 562 deaths per year in Cheshire West and Chester. The majority of these deaths were due to lung cancer, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, heart disease and stroke. Further information can be found at the Cheshire West and Chester Joint Strategic Needs Assessment web pages and the Local Tobacco Control Profiles for England:

http://www.wcheshirepct.nhs.uk/default.asp?page=Joint_Strategic_Needs_Assessment/5_Smoking.asp
http://www.lho.org.uk/LHO_TOPICS/ANALYTIC_TOOLS/TOBACCOCONTROLPROFILES/profile.aspx

Last gasp for cigarette vending machines

From the 1st of October 2011, the sale of tobacco from vending machines is prohibited across England. The ban has been introduced to prevent under-age sales to children and to support adults who are trying to quit.

Nearly all of adult smokers started smoking before they turned 18 and every year over 300,000 children try smoking for the first time. Of the children who regularly smoke 11 per cent buy their cigarettes from vending machines.

Cigarette vending machines are often unsupervised, making it easy for children to buy cigarettes from them. It is estimated that 35 million cigarettes are sold illegally through vending machines to children every year.

All children really want is their parents to quit smoking

Children are so concerned about the impact of smoking on their parent's health that they'd go to considerable lengths to get them to give up, including: going without Christmas presents; giving up their pocket money; and even committing to complete their homework every night according to new research published on 1st November 2011.

The research, which was conducted on behalf of Department of Health, reveals the anti smoking stance of a new smokefree generation of kids who are so opposed to cigarettes they've labelled smoking stupid, say they will never try a cigarette and that they wish that nobody in the world smoked.

Further information is available at <http://mediacentre.dh.gov.uk/2011/11/01/all-children-want-christmas-parents-quit-smoking/>

Cheshire Charter

Health and local authority services which support residents in the community have been awarded the Cheshire Charter, accrediting their work to protect staff from the ill effects of secondhand smoke. Organisations with Cheshire Charter accreditation will request that a client provide a room which has been smoke free for a minimum of 30 minutes prior to a planned visit by community staff.

Other Charter criteria specify that the organisation has a smokefree workplace policy that it advises clients and staff on ways to minimise their risk of exposure to second-hand smoke, and also advises on smokefree issues and stop smoking services.

Among others NHS Western Cheshire, Community Care Western Cheshire, Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, Cheshire West and Chester Council, Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, Central and Eastern Cheshire Primary Care Trust, Cheshire East Community Health and the Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service have been accredited with the Cheshire Charter by cardiovascular health charity Heart of Mersey which devised the scheme.

It is hoped to extend Cheshire Charter accreditation to Cheshire West and Chester Childminders during 2012-13.



Take 7 Steps Out Campaign

The Take 7 Steps Out campaign has been developed to protect children from secondhand smoke by encouraging smokers to take 7 steps outside to smoke. First launched in August 2010, the ongoing partnership between Tobacco Free Futures and Primary Care Trusts in the North West continues, supported by further bursts of TV activity.



The impact of the first phase of this campaign has been evaluated, with encouraging results; 19% of the target audience reported a change in behaviour by going right outside to smoke and even though this was not specifically a quit campaign - 6% reported having made a quit attempt.

Local activity has been a key element of the campaign. NHS Western Cheshire hosted a successful Take 7 Steps Out roadshow last summer at Ellesmere Port Market.

Around 200 information packs were given out to the general public and the roadshow generated a good deal of local and regional media coverage including Dee 106.3 and in the Ellesmere Port Standard.

In order to strengthen this successful message, Tobacco Free Futures has developed materials for healthcare professionals, and GPs in particular. Three types of leaflets have been created for GPs to use during in consultations where a child presents with symptoms of asthma, glue ear or tonsillitis.

For further information, please visit the Take 7 Steps Out Campaign website at <http://www.take7stepsout.co.uk>.



CIPR Pride Awards - Take 7 Steps Out wins

On 23rd November 2011, the Take 7 Steps Out campaign won a Gold Award at the Chartered Institute of Public Relations North West Pride event in Manchester. This was to 'recognise excellence and reward achievement in public relations and communications'. It won against tough competition in the Public Sector category, and was also shortlisted in the Not For Profit category.

This latest award for Take 7 Steps Out follows a similar win in the Marketing Society Northern Awards, and 'highly commended' in the recent North West Public Health Awards.

The campaign has also already been run by Fresh Smokefree North East, and has attracted considerable interest from elsewhere in the country as well as being featured in Coronation Street.

Tackling Illicit Tobacco for better health

Tobacco Free Futures, formally Smokefree North West, is a key agency in [The North of England Tackling Illicit Tobacco for Better Health programme](#), along with colleagues from [Fresh Smoke Free North East](#) and [Smokefree Yorkshire and the Humber](#).

Working with partners from Trading Standards and their Scambuster teams, HM Revenue and Customs, the UK Border Agency, police forces, the Serious and Organised Crime Agency and the Association of Chief Police Officers the programme is believed to be the first of its kind in the world.

The illicit tobacco programme is responsible for the [Get Some Answers](#) campaign to stamp out illegal tobacco, which particularly highlights the danger to children that affordable illicit tobacco represents.

Phase two of the "Get Some Answers" campaign - [Keep It Out](#) - was rolled out on 24th October 2011 and lasted for four weeks. It is aimed at three target audiences using three tailored messages:

Public - The availability of illegal tobacco in your community is encouraging your children to smoke

Three poster executions and a radio advert will be developed to communicate with this audience.

Retailers - You're doing your bit as a responsible retailer - can you help more to "keep it out"?

A revised retailer pack will be developed to communicate with this audience.

Publicans - The sale of illicit tobacco on your premises is illegal and could also cost you your licence.

Packs stickers and beer mats are being explored as communication methods for this audience.

The call to action will be to call Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.



Results

The Illicit Tobacco Programme has had a really positive impact on driving down the illicit tobacco trade, making more people aware of what illicit tobacco is and how it damages communities. It has also provided evidence of successful partnership working. The programme has resulted in less illegal tobacco being bought and sold on housing estates, fewer people turning a blind eye and more action aimed at bringing sellers to justice.

A recent evaluation of the programme has found that fewer people are buying illegal tobacco and those buying it are buying less.

- Across the North of England (North West and North East) the number of smokers buying illegal tobacco has fallen by 10%, down two percentage points from 20% to 18%.
- The number of 16-34 year olds buying illegal tobacco has reduced by 5-6%.
- The total amount of all tobacco consumed has gone down by 27% in the North East and 15% in the North West.

For the final evaluation report from the UK Centre for Tobacco Control Studies; January 2012; please go to <http://www.ukctcs.org/ukctcs/documents/tackling-illicit-tobacco/evaluation.pdf>

A Chemical Soup spreads through communities in West Cheshire and encourages parents to Take 7 Steps Out

Tobacco Free Futures has teamed up with children's charity Barnardo's to bring a chemical soup into communities within West Cheshire to encourage parents and guardians to Take 7 Steps Out of the house when smoking.

The *Chemical Soup* kit, complete with cooking pot and fake hazardous liquids, will show parents some of the harmful chemicals in cigarette smoke – such as arsenic, formaldehyde and cadmium. Of more than 4,000 chemicals in cigarette smoke, 60 are known to cause cancer as well as avoidable childhood illnesses.

Lloyd McCalla, Family Support Worker, Stanlow Abbey Children's Centre said: "I was really surprised to find out that there are more than 4,000 chemicals in cigarettes and what these chemicals are.

As part of my role I visit families in the home and I'm going to share what I've learnt with parents so that they can protect their children from the harms of secondhand smoke."

Julie Webster, Director of Public Health for West Cheshire said: "Smoking around

children is responsible for at least 34,000 preventable GP and hospital visits across the North West every year. In enclosed spaces it exposes their vulnerable lungs and bodies to harmful toxins. We have a duty to support parents with the best possible information. Parents and other family members may not know that many of the harmful chemicals in cigarette smoke are invisible, so standing by an open window or door is simply not enough to protect their children. This new community activity will help highlight the dangers and show that there is a way to prevent harm; go right outside the house to help protect children from secondhand smoke."

Deirdre Lewis, Children's Services Manager for Barnardo's in the North West said: "Using the Chemical Soup kit helps us equip parents with knowledge in our communities so they can make a positive step to protecting their children's health. Everybody has had lots of fun today but they've also taken away some serious messages. We want them now to pass on these messages and get the community talking so that we can prevent many children from suffering unnecessarily."

This community activity is the next stage of the successful *Take 7 Steps Out* campaign which encourages smokers to smoke right outside, especially when children are in the house. It coincides with a North West TV advert campaign, following a successful first run last summer after which nearly one in five (19%) of the target audience said that they now go right outside to smoke to protect their children from secondhand smoke.

For more information about the campaign please visit: www.take7stepsout.co.uk



Trainer Rosie Critchlow shows Lloyd McCalla, Family Support Worker just what goes into a cigarette.

**Quit4Good:
Western Cheshire
NHS Stop Smoking Service**

This service is dedicated to providing safe, effective evidence based stop smoking support designed to suit all individual needs and to give people every chance of quitting for good. The clinics offer free, friendly advice and support in a variety of settings (see stop smoking clinics info map at <http://www.quit4good.org/#StopSmokingMap#StopSmokingMap>).

People are up to four times more likely to give up smoking if you use your local Quit 4 good NHS Stop Smoking Service.

Smokers who want to stop can contact the service via the following methods:

- **Phone: 0800 043 5134**
- **Text: 'QUIT4GOOD' to 60777**
- **Complete the online form at**
http://www.quit4good.org/contact_us.asp
- **E-Mail: Quit@Quit4Good.org**



Action on Smoking and Health (ASH) Briefings

Action on Smoking and Health (ASH) is a campaigning public health charity that works to eliminate the harm caused by tobacco. ASH publishes briefings which provide supporting evidence for a range of tobacco control measures.

Latest briefings:

ASH Briefing on smoke drift in the home and workplace

Troubled by neighbours' smoke coming into your home? There is no easy solution but this briefing provides some practical steps you can take to minimise the problem.

Published: 05/12/2011

http://www.ash.org.uk/files/documents/ASH_827.pdf

ASH Briefing on Plain Packaging

Plain packaging is important because it would help to reduce smoking uptake amongst children and young people. Australia will become the first country in the world to require all tobacco products to be sold in plain packaging from December 2012.

Published: 30/11/2011

http://www.ash.org.uk/files/documents/ASH_699.pdf

ASH Briefing on Tobacco Vending Machines

Despite a voluntary agreement stating that tobacco vending machines should be sited in places not regularly used by children, young people have little difficulty in making purchases since the machines are self-service and rarely supervised.

Published: 13/09/2011

http://www.ash.org.uk/files/documents/ASH_700.pdf