

HEALTH

PROMOTION

AUDIT

SMOKING

CESSATION

Smoking cessation

Background

In the UK the annual cost of smoking to the NHS is around £500,000,000. Lung cancer kills about 33,000 people a year.

Health of the Nation targets on smoking and lung cancer

- *to reduce the death rate from lung cancer by at least 30% in men under 75 and by at least 15% in women under 75 by the year 2000*
- *to reduce the prevalence of smoking in men and women over the age of 16 to no more than 20% by the year 2000*
- *to reduce smoking prevalence among 11 to 15 year olds to less than 6%*

Smoking is also a risk factor for coronary heart disease (CHD) and stroke and so encouraging people to give up will save lives and save NHS costs.

Health of the nation targets CHD and Stroke (NSF / QOF targets??_

- *to reduce the death rate for CHD and stroke in people under 65 by at least 40% by the year 2000*
- *to reduce the death rate for CHD and stroke in people under 65 - 74 by at least 30% by the year 2000*

Advice about smoking may be a component of primary, secondary or tertiary health promotion:

- *Primary: encouraging people not to start smoking*
- *Secondary: encouraging otherwise healthy smokers to stop*
- *Tertiary: encouraging smokers to stop during rehabilitation after, for example CHD or stroke. This may involve primary or secondary health promotion for relatives of these patients.*

Pharmacists need to think not only about the level of promotion but also about the target groups, some of whom may not visit the pharmacy. There is evidence that the number of teenage smokers is increasing. While the incidence of male smokers was decreasing, men are still more likely to suffer CHD or stroke. These two groups often don't visit the pharmacy so the provision of information may need to be via a friend, relative or partner.

Pharmacists should be encouraged to audit their current activities and then make changes. Sometimes pharmacists are reluctant to be pro-active and may only respond to requests.

The psychology of giving up

Psychologists have identified three phases of smoking cessation. People may be at different points on the continuum of readiness to change:

- *Early phase*

In this phase there is build up of self-awareness of the health risks of smoking.

Pharmacists can:

- encourage smokers to voice their concerns about smoking
- encourage smokers to make their own decisions about the need for change

About 35 per cent of smokers are in this phase at any one time.

- *Ambivalent phase*

In this phase there is personal conflict - a simultaneous desire to quit and to continue smoking.

Pharmacists can exploit this conflict by:

- supplying information to the smoker to help them make an informed choice
- exploring with the smoker the benefits and disadvantages of giving up.

About 50 per cent of smokers are currently in this phase.

- *Action phase*

Here the smoker has made the decision to change.

Pharmacists can help the smoker by:

- providing a detailed plan of how to make the change
- helping with the implementation of the quitting strategy
- helping the person to stay a non-smoker.

Opportunities for audit

Structure audit

- *pharmacist's personal knowledge and training*
- *pharmacy support staff knowledge and training*
- *information leaflets*
- *no-smoking policies in the pharmacy for staff, including locums, and customers.*

Process audit

- *opportunistic interventions about smoking advice*
- *dealing with requests for information about smoking cessation and for cessation products*
- *following up would-be quitters*
- *recording progress*

- *providing cessation clinics*
- *providing information through articles in the local press or by talks to local groups.*

Outcome audit

- *the number of opportunistic interventions made*
- *the number of referrals*
- *the number of people who remain quitters after, for example, six months.*

An audit on identifying smokers and encouraging cessation

Criterion

There should be a policy in the pharmacy to identify smokers and encourage them to quit.

Structure

Available resources:

- *leaflets, posters, nicotine replacement products*
- *trained staff (or staff to be trained if not already)*
- *information / access to 0800 helplines*
- *information on support groups*
- *progress card for cessation progress.*
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Standards

- 1 All pharmacists and pharmacy support staff to undergo appropriate training on smoking cessation and communication skills if they are not already appropriately trained.
- 2 Suitable support materials will be used and vetted for quality
- 3 Pharmacy support staff should refer all people who ask for information about smoking or request cessation products to the pharmacist
- 4 All customers requesting cough mixtures for unexplained or smoker's coughs should be referred to the pharmacist
- 5 All customers within target groups identified as being at particular risk will be given information about smoking risks and cessation by giving them information leaflets with their medicines or on request.

Process

- *identifying smokers (from those requesting advice, information or cessation products) and ascertaining whether they want to give up*
- *targeting groups at particular risk (e.g. those with hypertension, asthma, diabetes, and those who are pregnant or contemplating pregnancy)*

- *offering advice and support to those who want to give up, including asking whether they want to join a cessation programme*
- *encouraging people to come back and report progress*
- *recording progress on forms or PMRs.*

Outcome

- *increased awareness of issues about smoking and associated risks*
- *identified GP referrals where appropriate*
- *reduction in the number of smokers*
- *reduction in the number of cigarettes smoked*
- *improved sales of cessation products*
- *other patients / customer become discontented smokers and will be nearer giving up*
- *increase in the numbers of smokers in each of the target groups with extra risk factors who give up.*

Resources

- *Pharmacists Action on Smoking (PAS) Group provides materials to help you promote smoking cessation. For more information contact NPA,*
- *Health Promotion and the Community Pharmacist (HEA/NPA) provides a section giving advice and sources of materials for smoking cessation. Available from the HEA or from the NPA Sales Office.*
- *Health Promotion and the Community Pharmacist (Oxford University Press) available through bookshops and via the NPA Sales Office.*

Source: North Thames Pharmacy Audit Facilitators' Workshop at HEA

Questionnaire/flow chart for identifying customers likely to respond to advice and support about smoking cessation

(can be used as a questionnaire to identify people who may join the local cessation programme, or used as a data collection form)

