

Record year for Stop Smoking Services

THE North East has had another record year for NHS Stop Smoking Services in 2010-11 in the latest statistics from the NHS Information Centre

North East NHS Stop Smoking Services achieved the highest number of quitters per population size of any SHA, with 1,225 quitters per 100,000 people compared to 911 quitters nationally.

In total, 26,038 people quit smoking successfully with the region's six NHS Stop Smoking Services from March 2010 to April 2011 - 553 more than in the previous year and an increase of 2.2 per cent.



The number of people in the region attempting to stop smoking is also on the rise. The Stop Smoking Services recorded 58,660 quit attempts in the North East last year - which is up 4.3 per cent on 2009/2010.

Alison Nichol, manager of Northumberland NHS Stop Smoking Service said "As well as the obvious health problems caused, we are seeing more and more people wanting to quit because of financial pressures - the actual cost of smoking is an increasingly important factor in the decision to quit."

An initial Fresh analysis was sent out to Directors of Public Health, service providers and commissioners and a detailed report is in production. The release of these figures to the media also attracted significant media coverage.

However, over one-fifth of the adult population continues to smoke, directly resulting in 461,700 hospital admissions a year, as well as 81,700 deaths in England each year (18% of all deaths amongst the adult population over 35).

The annual Statistics on Smoking in England report 2011 from the NHS Information Centre also highlighted that:

- In 2010 there were around 461,700 hospital admissions in England attributable to smoking. This relates to 5% of all hospital admissions.
- Approximately 81,700 deaths in 35 year olds and over in England in 2010 caused by smoking. This is 18% of all deaths.

Tackling tobacco at a local and regional level

TWO pieces of work are due to be published this autumn to help local decision makers make the case for continued investment to tackle smoking. As Public Health transfers to local government from 2013 it will be crucial to make a case based on the strong evidence base, the need and the popularity for tackling tobacco.

The cost of smoking

New figures are set to reveal the total cost of smoking to the North East and the impressive savings achieved in tackling tobacco.

Brunel University's has developed an innovative tool to enable commissioners in localities to model the impact of changes in the number of smokers in their population. This assesses the impact of both having a regional tier of tobacco control and a dedicated Stop Smoking Service.

It also calculates the cost to local areas of smoking related diseases to Primary Care through GP costs and prescriptions and Secondary Care. Localities will also receive localised briefings from Fresh setting out the human and financial cost of smoking, as well as focusing on local public opinion towards tackling tobacco.

'the local case for action on tobacco and smoking'

Fresh, ASH, the Faculty of Public Health, the Local Government Group and the other two other regional offices of tobacco control have produced a suite of materials to aid local tobacco control planning. The first set is aimed for use by Directors of Public Health and is available on the ASH website at www.ash.org.uk

Tackling tobacco is a high priority: stakeholder survey

FRESH and Balance, the North East's alcohol office, recently asked senior stakeholders to feed back on satisfaction levels with the two programmes and their contribution to reducing health harm across the region.

Key findings from Fresh (overall 146 respondents) are:

- For tobacco, the majority (95%) of respondents believe Fresh has made an excellent or good contribution to addressing tobacco issues in the North East.
- Tackling tobacco is described as a serious or very serious problem in their area by nine in ten stakeholders (90%).
- Tobacco control is an important issue for almost three in four stakeholders (74%), in senior stakeholders it is even more important (84%).
- Most stakeholders (97%), and all senior stakeholders (100%) agree with the principle of joined up working in the North East to address tobacco issues.
- For tobacco the majority (88%) of stakeholders think the partnership working of Fresh is strong/very strong.
- Satisfaction levels for both Fresh and Balance compare extremely favorably with the MORI brand excellence model used to assess performance of the FTSE 250 top companies in the UK.
- Key areas suggested for improvement relate to the need for a longer funding/planning cycle, local visibility especially with senior council representatives, more media campaigns, and clarity on the commissioning of the programmes.

Fresh media tour

PR evaluation for 2010/11:

EARNED media in the region's newspapers, radio and TV and online channels are a crucial way to keep reaching smokers with messages about why to quit, how to quit, and how to protect their children from the harm of tobacco.



Independent evaluation of Fresh media coverage shows that the number of opportunities to see or hear has doubled over the previous year.

The results are very positive and show that the media appetite to cover a range of tobacco issues in the North East is as strong as ever:

The summary of Fresh media coverage for 2010/11 - not including paid for campaigns was:

- Coverage by Fresh has reached 66% of North East adults an average of 23 times.
- 129 million positive opportunities to see tobacco issues coverage.
- A direct call to action to call an NHS Stop Smoking Service or Crimestoppers was used in the majority of articles.
- Earned media value of £3.03 million.
- Positive to negative coverage of 100:1.
- A range of spokespersons - not just Fresh but NHS Stop Smoking Services, hospital specialists, GPs, elected members and trading standards among others.
- It's a huge credit to so many stakeholders, from Alliance leads who have helped obtain quotes for press releases about illegal tobacco, to elected members and Directors of Public Health, to GPs and specialists working in secondary care who have provided a voice on issues such as COPD and secondhand smoke.
- 440 articles.
- 18,029 seconds of broadcast coverage.

September: the new New Year?

FRESH issued localised press releases to the media in early September against new insight that many smokers see September as a prime month to quit.

The combination of darker nights, the end of the summer holidays and summer duty free, and the looming cost of Christmas, are making it a busy month for many advisers.

Fresh calculated that a 20 a day smoker quitting at the start of September could save £500 by the start of December - almost enough to pay for the average British family's Christmas.

No Smoking Day 2012



IT'S always a tightly guarded secret. But the theme of No Smoking Day 2011 will be unveiled at the regional launch event.

This year's "Leap to it" images may give a clue but more details will be shared at the Radisson Blue Hotel, Frankland Lane, Durham on Tuesday, November 8, 12noon-4pm.

Last year the North East once again held the largest number of local events in communities to help people quit.

To register visit www.nosmokingday.org.uk



EVERY BREATH YOU TAKE
EVERY MOVE YOU MAKE
I'LL BE WATCHING YOU.



Every breath
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WELCOME

WELCOME to the autumn edition of Re-fresh, the newsletter from Fresh – Smoke Free North East. This edition sees the launch of our major new stop smoking campaign in conjunction with the British Lung Foundation to raise awareness of the risks of developing chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) if people don't quit. We also expose the tobacco industry's latest efforts to hook young female smokers through attractive packaging.

refresh*



"Every breath"

"Mass media campaigns have been proven to keep reinforcing the message that smoking kills and driving intentions to quit."

FRESH and the British Lung Foundation combine forces this autumn to deliver an uncompromising new campaign aimed at showing smokers that every cigarette is doing them damage.

The "Every breath" TV advert launches in early October to reach 1.7 million viewers in the North East. It shows the progression of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) on a mother's lungs towards full blown incapacity, and the devastating impact it has on her family.

Music legend Sting gave permission to Fresh for the lyrics from his emotive and iconic song to be spoken by a narrator to help reduce smoking in his native North East.

The TV ad will run alongside a radio campaign that invites listeners to participate in a breathing exercise where they briefly experience what breathing is like in the late stages of COPD.

COPD is an umbrella term for a number of lung conditions including chronic bronchitis and emphysema. It is the UK's fifth biggest killer - killing more people every year than breast, bowel or prostate cancer and 90% of cases are caused by smoking.

The North East has the highest prevalence of COPD in England, and it is estimated that over 32,000 people in the North East have undiagnosed COPD, especially in areas with heavy smoking.

As well as GP costs this also places extreme pressure on the acute sector - COPD is the second biggest cause of emergency admissions to hospital.

Many smokers assume that shortness of breath or a cough is simply a normal part of smoking, and avoid seeking medical advice or quitting before more damage is done. The campaign will deliver the clear message that breathlessness is an early sign of COPD.

Ailsa Rutter, Director of Fresh, said: "Some of the previous campaigns such as the 'fatty cigarette' are still talked about by smokers now. But it has been many years since most smokers have seen or heard a new campaign that focuses primarily on the harmful effects of smoking."

"Fresh research with smokers this spring found that harder hitting campaign health messages combined with seeing the impact on loved ones were rated as having the most impact."

"Mass media campaigns have been proven to keep reinforcing the message that smoking kills and driving intentions to quit."

The campaign will refer people to the NHS smokefree helpline and an 'Every breath' microsite to take the first step towards quitting, with signposting towards the British Lung Foundation for more information about COPD.

Press and media relations will play a key role, highlighting former smokers

referred through NHS Stop Smoking Services and people with COPD from British Lung Foundation Breath Easy groups. We also aim to supply the media with localised quotes from respiratory physicians from all over the North East.

The COPD campaign and all future Fresh stop smoking campaigns will fit under an umbrella tagline of "Every cigarette is doing you damage" to communicate with smokers about a range of related diseases.

Fresh has worked with the British Lung Foundation, World Health Organisation, and been advised by a number of respiratory physicians from the North East.



EVERY CIGARETTE IS DOING YOU DAMAGE

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Tackling illegal tobacco

Major survey shows illegal tobacco market has shrunk in the North East



A survey of over 4,000 people in the North East and North West in 2011 has revealed that the market in illegal tobacco has shrunk since the launch of the 'Tackling Illegal Tobacco for Better Health Programme'.

The Illicit Tobacco North of England Study 2011 repeated the largest survey yet into attitudes and purchasing of illegal tobacco in target communities, originally carried out in 2009.

It found real impact in the North East through the partnership efforts of the NHS, Local Authorities, HMRC and police to reduce supply and demand, making illegal tobacco less desirable, acceptable and available.

- Total cigarette volume consumed is down by 27%
- The proportion of smokers buying duty free is down 11%, from 48% to 37%

- The prevalence of purchasing illegal tobacco is down 2 percent to 18%
- Total illegal tobacco volume smoked is down by 39%

The survey also found a small shift among illegal tobacco buyers away from sources such as tab houses, with worrying evidence that more smokers are buying illegal tobacco from shops and being offered them in pubs and clubs.

Smokers also confirmed reports from trading standards that there is more foreign brand in the market and less counterfeit availability. While most buyers will also buy legal cigarettes, illicit is often an opportunistic purchase.

Illicit Tobacco Toolkit

FRESH is working with Smoke Free North West to produce a new toolkit for other regions and jurisdictions interested in reducing the supply and demand of illegal tobacco in their communities.

This toolkit is based on the experiences gained during the development and implementation of the North of England Tackling Illicit Tobacco for Better Health Programme - believed

to be the first programme of its kind in the world.

The toolkit will be in four modules:

- Developing partnerships
- Generating intelligence and delivering enforcement
- Marketing and communications
- Assessing progress

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Secondhand smoke



The 7 Steps campaign has protected many children from smoke

THE third wave of the 'Take 7 Steps Out' campaign ran on TV during July, shortly after the findings that the previous two phases appear to have reduced the likelihood of parents who smoke lighting up in the home.

Independent evaluation of 'the campaign, by the University of Bath, has found a rise of 9% in the number of smokers who keep their homes smokefree in 2011 compared to 2010.

- Over half (52%) of smokers say their homes are now smokefree in 2011 compared to 43% in 2010. This compares against a rise of just 2% in smokefree homes among smokers nationally.
- A rise of 7% more parents understand that smoking is one of the leading avoidable causes of cot death - causing 40 deaths a year nationally. This rose from 43% of parents in 2010 to 50% in 2011. This compares to a 1% decrease in awareness nationally.

A remaining challenge is to reach those who still do not believe the evidence around this issue.

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Vending Machines

VENDING machines are an easy way for under-18s to buy cigarettes - especially where the machines are unsupervised. That is why from October 1 it became illegal to sell cigarettes directly from vending machines, regardless of a customer's age.

Test purchases by trading standards in the North East found that children were able to buy cigarettes in 58 out of 99 cases. And 17% of 11-15 year olds who regularly smoke say that they buy cigarettes from vending machines.

To comply with the new law, pubs and any other establishments with machines must ensure:

- That the machine cannot be used by the public to buy cigarettes or any other tobacco product.
- All tobacco adverts on the machine will also need to be removed or securely covered up so that they are no longer visible.

A mailshot has been sent from the Department of Health out to businesses giving them clear guidance on the issue to avoid fines of up to £5,000.

For more information managers and owners are being urged to speak to their local Trading Standards Department or visit businesslink.gov.uk/vending



Industry expose: the power of cigarette brands

TOBACCO companies are increasingly using the power of brands and colourful packaging to attract young smokers - especially fashionable young women.

Imperial Tobacco has become the third major cigarette supplier to launch a brand targeted at women in just four months with its Richmond Superslims.

Sold in pink or menthyl green, Richmond Superslims are described as:

"Super slim and super stylish, the unique pack design provides a smaller, discreet format that is convenient to complement busy modern lifestyles."

Tobacco companies are working harder to make pack designs attractive and alluring with tobacco due to be moved out of sight in supermarkets by 2012 and smaller shops by 2015.

Earlier this year Fresh helped reveal that British American Tobacco was targeting women in the North East with their

"Vogue Perle" superslms, to condemnation from MPs and doctors.

A consultation on whether tobacco should be sold in plain packaging is likely to take place in this country in late 2011 or early 2012. The Australian government is pursuing similar legislation, with three main aims:

- To reduce the attractiveness to young people - Peer-reviewed studies have found that plain packaging is less attractive to young people than branded cigarettes.
- Cigarette packaging has been used for many decades to sell the lie that some cigarettes are safer or milder than others. It's now illegal to brand cigarettes "low tar" but the colours still carry subtle messages.
- Plain packaging would make health warnings more obvious

Smoking in cars



The British Lung Foundation is calling for a ban on smoking in cars with children

A Private Members Bill calling for a ban on smoking in cars carrying children is being tabled by Stockton North MP Alex Cunningham. The bill follows the British Lung Foundation's campaign and petition signed by more than 15,000 people.

Fresh is not at this point calling for a ban on smoking in cars while other important tobacco control measures

are going through the parliamentary process, but has helped supply the British Lung Foundation and Alex Cunningham with information, and has campaigned for more awareness on the issue.

Ailsa Rutter, Director of Fresh, said: "It's clear the tobacco industry is on a fierce branding offensive using all the power of packaging to recruit new smokers. If this did not work, they would not spend so much money on it."

"No-one would pretend this will have a dramatic impact on existing smokers - it's about the messages pack designs give to children. One teenage girl recently commented she thought Vogue Perle cigarettes were less harmful than other cigarettes."

"Most smokers start aged around 15. It is vital we look to closing off these remaining loopholes in cigarette advertising if we are serious about reducing youth smoking in the future."

The tobacco industry has already been criticised for scare tactics with unfounded claims that plain packaging would result in a rise in illegal tobacco.

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