

Report of the Director of Public Health

Stop Smoking support and the provision of Pharmacotherapies.

Summary

1. This report outlines the development of a targeted approach to Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) provision within the City of York Council stop smoking service.

Recommendations

2. The Executive Member is asked:

To support and agree to Option two detailed within this paper.

The provision of NRT free of charge for 12 weeks to pregnant women receiving stop smoking support services and for 2 weeks to those in receipt of stop smoking services who meet the criteria

Reason: This will help to protect the unborn child from the effects of passive smoking by providing free NRT to pregnant women for 12 weeks thus increasing their chances of successfully quitting smoking for the duration of their pregnancy. NRT will also be made available free of charge for 2 weeks for those residents accessing the Council's stop smoking service who are financially disadvantaged. This is to provide interim support with the expectation that they then fund NRT themselves after this period.

Background

3. In April 2013 the responsibility for commissioning local stop smoking services transferred from the NHS to local authorities. City of York Council inherited a number of contracts for stop smoking services which ended on 31 March 2016. Since 1 April 2016, stop smoking services are now provided by the Council.

4. Up to 31 March 2016, under the old contracts, all patients accessing the stop smoking service were able to access NRT free of charge as part of a universal offer. Since the service transferred to the Council, the universal offer has been reviewed and a decision has been made to target the offer to ensure the maximum benefit from the stop smoking services budget by focusing on those with the highest need.
5. The review of the service has been undertaken against a background of increasing financial constraints with cuts to the local authority Public Health Grant Allocation imposed by the Department of Health.

Consultation

6. Discussions have taken place with the Vale of York Clinical Commissioning Group, the Local Medical Committee and Community Pharmacists. There is broad support for continuing to provide NRT free of charge. The CYC Public Health Team will be working in partnership with Community Pharmacy North Yorkshire to ensure that residents who are eligible for free NRT are able to access this.

Options

7. **Option one:** provision of NRT to pregnant women only. There is a strong evidence base for supporting pregnant women to stop smoking. The risks of smoking during pregnancy are very serious and include premature delivery to low birth weight, miscarriage, still birth and sudden infant death. Quitting smoking is the best thing a pregnant woman can do for herself and her baby. Pregnant women will be referred via a Maternity pathway established with community midwives during the gestation of pregnancy. Women will be seen every week by a specialist smoking adviser who will issue a request for NRT based on the individuals need via the Pharmoutcomes software. This system will be already established within designated community pharmacies.
8. The other target groups will be offered supported advice to enable them to quit successfully and given advice on which products they can buy over the counter.
9. **Option two:** Would follow option one – the provision of free NRT for pregnant women - with the addition of the provision of a small 'hardship fund'. This would be accessible for clients who, through their discussions with the smoking advisers, have disclosed that they are financially disadvantaged (for example on benefits, unemployed) and that the cost of NRT is substantially more costly than the cost of

cigarettes, this difference in cost could be due to the fact they are smoking 'roll up cigarettes' or buying illicit or cut price cigarettes. The smoking advisor will arrange for 2 weeks supply of free NRT; this would enable the individual to 'save' the cost of the cigarettes and move to purchase the NRT for themselves.

10. The decision to provide two weeks free NRT will be based on strict criteria including:
 - Proof of receipt of benefit, e.g. income support
 - Proof of residency of City of York Council
 - Client agreement to fund the rest of their own course of NRT.

Analysis

11. Options one and two offer evidenced based solutions to providing a targeted smoking support service which takes into account the substantial cuts that have been made to the Public Health budget; in City of York the cuts to the Public Health Budget already made in 2015/16 and 2016/17 amount to £1.2 million, whilst protecting the needs of the most vulnerable in our city. Smoking remains an important public health issue and by providing this service we are protecting an essential provision to support the health of our population.
12. The smoking support offered by the Council is only part of the offer of smoking advice, information and guidance to support smokers to quit smoking. The Council has signed up to 'Breathe 2025', which is a campaign which individuals and organisations to sign up to 'inspire a smoke free generation'. While the region has the highest adult smoking prevalence in England (20.1% compared to an England average of 18%), only one in eight 15-year-olds smoke and the proportion of young smokers is dropping. Within the next decade there could be a generation of children that don't smoke.
13. Breathe 2025 is part of the proposed approach to tobacco control across the city, working with partners from the NHS, Vale of York Clinical Commissioning Group and the voluntary and business sectors to work towards the aspiration to have a city wide Tobacco Control Strategy and Action Plan that addresses the use of tobacco across the life course.

Council Plan

14. The Council Plan 2015-19 sets out three overall aims and the decisions outlined in the paper reflects these aims in the following ways:

- **A prosperous City for all** – all projects are assessed in a robust and evidenced based way, when making tough decisions on finance we do so in an open and transparent way so all partners are clear about the financial challenges we face.
- **A focus on frontline services** – engagement with residents, partners encourages views to be listened to and opinions considered; we ensure access opportunities are equal regardless of background, and residents are supported to live healthily. We work to reduce the gap between those who are the highest achievers and the most vulnerable, by targeting services to those most in need.
- **A council that listens to residents** – the use of evidence based decision making underpins all the decisions made and a commitment to public engagement ensure that view and opinions are listened to.

Specialist Implications

15. Financial

Option one: The numbers of pregnant smokers referred varies from year to year so this is an estimate. Approximately 200-300 pregnant women are referred each year, of these 80 to 100 pregnant women engage with the service. If each woman was 'prescribed' 12 weeks of medication of a single NRT product this equates to 960 weeks of NRT.

Offering NRT through community pharmacists will incur a dispensing charge of £3 per prescription.

For option one the total maximum anticipated cost would be £16,800.

Option two: Would incur the same costs for pregnant women as detailed above plus the cost of providing two weeks NRT for those who are seriously financially challenged.

The total cost of Option 2 is estimated to be £17,988.

For both options the costs will be met from the Public Health Grant Local Authority Allocation. Funding has been allocated in the budget for 2016/17 for this purpose.

Human Resources (HR)

16. There are no HR implications from this report.

Equalities

17. Smoking during pregnancy is strongly associated with a number of factors including age and deprivation. By prioritising pregnant women who smoke and targeting resources to help them to quit the stop smoking service will be helping to tackle health inequalities across the City and improve the life chances of the unborn child.
18. Rates of smoking declined in the UK in recent years, but the rate of decline has been significantly slower in more disadvantaged groups. Smokers from disadvantaged areas find it more difficult to stop with the help of stop smoking support than their more affluent neighbours. Evidence suggests that this is due to: lack of social support, higher nicotine dependency and challenging life circumstances. The cost of tobacco represents a higher proportion of household income amongst poorer smokers, meaning that their tobacco use not only damages their health but also contributes to trapping people in poverty.
19. A Community Impact Assessment is in the process of being completed.

Legal:

20. No known implications.

Crime and Disorder:

21. No known implications.

Information Technology (IT):

22. No known implications.

Risk Management

23. By targeting our increasingly scarce resources to those most at risk of poorer health outcomes through smoking we are helping to tackle an important cause of health inequalities in York. This approach will be kept under review and evaluated.

Contact Details

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**Report
Approved**



Date 14/07/16

Specialist Implications Officer(s)

Financial: Patrick Looker, Finance Manager
Legal: Ruth Barton, Senior Solicitor

Wards Affected:

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

None