

NO BUTTS

ISSUE 4 WINTER 2006/07

Congratulations...!

Look what smoking cessation providers in the Northern Board area achieved during 2005/06!

- The numbers enrolled with services at 4 weeks increased in 2005/06 by 22%.
- The successful quit rate at 4 weeks averaged 58%.
- The number of people who remain successfully quit at 52 weeks was 22%
- 78% of people who enrolled for specialist smoking cessation services used NRT as their choice of treatment
- The equality response rate from people who availed of services at 4 weeks was 75%
- The number of specialist smoking cessation service providers was maintained and the number of people receiving specialist cessation training was also maintained from the previous year.



Message from the Chair

I would, once again, like to welcome you to the fourth edition of No Butts, the newsletter from the Northern Tobacco Control Group.

We now look forward to the exciting prospect of Northern Ireland going smoke-free from 30th April 2007.

We see the new pending legislation as a significant opportunity, not only to help people within their workplace from the effects of second hand smoke, but also provide impetus for smokers to quit.

Finally, I would like to thank all those who continue to work towards a tobacco free society.

I hope you enjoy this update from the Northern TCG and please feel free to contact me with any comments or suggestions for future issues.

Madeline Heaney
Chair
Northern Tobacco
Control Group

Specialist Smoking Cessation Training in the NHSSB area

The Northern Tobacco Control Group funded the North Eastern Education and Library Board to provide a two-day specialist smoking cessation programme delivered by the Ulster Cancer Foundation.

Teachers and school nurses within the Northern Board area were trained to help smokers quit. These professionals are now qualified as Specialist Advisors and are able to support young people who want to stop smoking.



...and 'Action' ... coming to a DVD near you ... the Northern Area Tobacco Control Group

The Northern Investing for Health Partnership recently produced a DVD, Making a Difference, to raise awareness and create understanding about the work and outcomes being delivered through the Partnership in taking forward the regional IFH strategy. The DVD helps to capture examples of the wide range of work being progressed by partners to address the health and well being of local people.



The Northern Area TCG highlights some of the work being taken forward to combat smoking across local workplaces. In the DVD Pat Purvis highlights the associated dangers of smoking and details a range of positive action that is taking place across the Northern Board area to tackle the problem. The smoking feature also includes a contribution from an ex-smoker, Molly Kane.



Check out www.nhssbtcg.co.uk

The Journey to Smoke-Free Northern Ireland

On Monday 30th April 2007 Northern Ireland's Smoke-free legislation will come into effect. From this date, smoking will no longer be permitted in enclosed public places and work places across Northern Ireland, including bars and restaurants.

The journey to Smoke-Free NI has taken over two years and below is a summary of how we have got here.

21 December 2004 - *A healthier future: a twenty year vision for health and wellbeing in Northern Ireland 2005-2025* consultation is produced by the DHSSPS which proposed options on smokefree workplaces.

25 March 2005 – The consultation period ends. 70,832 responses were received to the questions about strengthening existing tobacco controls in Northern Ireland – 91.18% of respondents expressed support for comprehensive controls similar to those already in place in the Republic of Ireland.

17 October 2005 - the Minister for Health, Shaun Woodward announced that all enclosed public places and workplaces in Northern Ireland are to go smokefree in April 2007.

6 March 2006 - The Minister launched a public consultation on the draft Smoking (Northern Ireland) Order. Views were sought on a range of issues including definitions of smoking and smoke-free premises, exemptions, offences and level of penalties, enforcement and the taking of power to raise the age limit for the sale of tobacco to young people.

25 September 2006 – Consultation launched by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety on the draft regulations underpinning the Order.

9 October 2006 – Smoking (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 was approved at Westminster.

3 November 2006 – Consultation on draft regulations underpinning the Order ended.

16 November 2006 – Health Minister, Paul Goggins, announced that Northern Ireland's smoke-free legislation will come into effect on 30 April 2007.

Before 30th April 2007

Responses to draft regulations are being considered. DHSSPS to issue guidance on good practice

The Northern TCG welcomes this legislation, which will save lives. It will protect the public and employees from the harmful effects of tobacco smoke. Smoking is the single greatest cause of preventable illness and premature death in Northern Ireland and we hope that this legislation will give smokers that extra incentive they may need to give up.

For more information on smoke-free Northern Ireland see www.smokefreenorthernireland.com



Happy Retirement!



Welcome!

The Northern Tobacco Control Group would like to take this opportunity to express its sincere thanks to the years of dedication and devotion shown by Hilary Robinson, Primary Care Facilitator for the Northern Board, in the fight against tobacco addiction. Hilary was one of the leading persons within the Northern Board area in relation to tackling the difficult issues around tobacco addiction. It is fair to say that Hilary will be missed by her colleagues on the TCG.

We would like to wish her a healthy and happy retirement.

Community Pharmacy Helps Smokers to Quit

A Regional Scheme to provide Nicotine Replacement and Specialist Advice has commenced in Northern Ireland from 1st December. Almost 70 pharmacies in the Northern Board will provide a free counselling support service by trained pharmacists who will advise the patient for up to twelve weeks. In previous years patients who embarked on a smoking cessation scheme run by community Pharmacies have shown quit rates of up to 60% after four weeks on the scheme.

Valerie Graham has been appointed as full-time Smoking Cessation Specialist for United Hospitals.

Valerie will be facilitating Stop Smoking Groups in the first instance in Whiteabbey, Braid Valley/Waveney and Antrim Area Hospitals. She will liaise and work with staff on various areas of Smoking Cessation work targeting those most of need.

Patients, clients, staff, family members and general public can avail of the service.

People can avail of cessation support by contacting:

Valerie Graham
c/o Nursing Administration
Braid Valley Hospital
Cushendall Road
BALLYMENA
BT43 6HH

Tel: 028 25 635217 (answering machine)

Mob: 07841 970 984

Email: valerie.graham@uh.n-i.nhs.uk

Smoking and Stroke

The link between smoking and stroke is less well documented than some of the other risk factors associated with smoking. Below are some facts about the association between smoking and stroke...

According to the website www.stroke.org.uk around a quarter of all strokes are linked to smoking and tobacco smoke increases the risk of stroke by about three-fold.

It has been suggested that smokers who also have high blood pressure have a twenty-times increased risk of stroke (STOP! Smoking Service, Leicester).

Strokes are caused by a blood clot (thrombotic stroke) or rupture of blood vessels (haemorrhagic stroke) in the brain. Strokes can vary in severity but generally cause some permanent damage such as slurred speech and confusion. Severe strokes can cause paralysis and death.

The increased risk of having a stroke as a smoker results from the fact that smoking makes the blood more likely to clot, it narrows and damages the blood vessels and it reduces the oxygen available to the brain.

The Framlingham Heart Study found that the risk of stroke increased with the number of cigarettes smoked.

A study carried out in New Zealand in 1999 concluded that non-smokers had a significant increased risk of stroke if they lived or worked with a smoker – this was found in some cases to be as high as an 82% increase.

It is never too late to give up smoking. Research has established that the relative risk of stroke decreases with smoking cessation. The Framlingham Heart Study reported that the risk had reached that of a non-smoker after five years from quitting, but that a significant reduction was evident after two years. This is due to the fact that by stopping smoking the blood is less likely to clot, there is an improved blood circulation to the brain as the heart can pump more blood around the body with less effort and further damage to blood vessels is prevented.

Antrim Borough Council Helps Businesses in Antrim to "Work Wiser"

The Northern TCG would like to congratulate the seven local businesses in Antrim Borough Council who were awarded certificates in recognition of their participation in the Workwise pilot scheme.



The Mayor of Antrim, Councillor Drew Ritchie, is pictured with representatives of those businesses which participated in the Workwise scheme. Also pictured is Ciara Daly, Environmental Health Officer with Antrim Borough Council and co-ordinator of the Scheme.

No Smoking Day 2007...Make a Fresh Start

Over 20 delegates from the Northern Board attended a briefing day in November organised by the Ulster Cancer Foundation on No Smoking Day 2007. Delegates found the day very informative and useful in planning for the 24th No Smoking Day campaign.

The next No Smoking Day will take place on Wednesday 14th March 2007 and the theme is Make a Fresh Start. This theme links into making a fresh start following the smoke-free legislation that will be introduced in Northern Ireland on 30th April 2007. The theme aims to illustrate the stark difference between a smoke-free and a smoke-filled life.

The campaign offers the following tips to smokers on going smoke-free:

- Set a quit date
- Find your nearest free stop smoking service
- Tell your family and friends you want to stop smoking
- Think of the health benefits that you will obtain from quitting
- Plan some treats with the money you save

Following the formal session, the Northern Board representatives had a meeting to share best practice and their experiences of the annual event. They discussed plans for No Smoking Day in order to take a partnership approach and achieve greater results.

Watch this space in the next issue for more information on No Smoking Day 2007 or go to www.nosmokingday.org.uk.