

# Smokefree Newsletter **Spring 2025**

**Better  
Health**

North  
Somerset

Smokefree Support

**Welcome to the Spring 25 Edition Smokefree North Somerset News. In this issue you will find information on:**

1. **CJ's Blog**
2. **Meet the team**
3. **Training dates**
4. **Advisor Questions**
5. **Swap to Stop**
6. **Webinars**
7. **Medications**
8. **Targeted Lung Health Checks**
9. **Data**

## **CJ's Blog**

### *A Fresh Perspective for Smokefree Advisors*

It's nearly my favourite time of year, as the days grow longer, the air turns fresher, and the first buds of spring begin to bloom, we are reminded of the beauty of renewal. Spring is a time of transformation, a chance to start afresh, to embrace change, and to reignite our passions. For Smokefree Advisors working in GP surgeries, pharmacies, and community settings across North Somerset, this season offers an opportunity to reflect on the vital role you play in changing lives for the better.

The work you do is not just important—it is lifesaving. Every conversation you have, every bit of support you offer, and every success story you witness is a testament to the power of positive change. The people you help are not just giving up cigarettes; they are reclaiming their health, their happiness, and their futures. You are the guiding light in their journey to a smokefree life, and that is something truly remarkable.

Spring is a season of hope, and hope is at the very heart of what you do. Each person you support comes to you with a desire for change, often carrying years of habit, fear, and self-doubt. But with your expertise, encouragement, and compassion, you help them see that a smokefree future is within reach. You provide them with the tools and strategies they need to overcome their challenges, and you stand by them as they take those crucial first steps towards a healthier life.

Just as nature renews itself in spring, now is a great time for you to rejuvenate your approach and reconnect with your purpose. Take a moment to reflect on the impact you've made. Think about the individuals who have come back to tell you how much better they feel, how they can now play with their children without getting out of breath, or how they have rediscovered a sense of control over their lives. These stories are the reason your work matters.

In the UK, smoking remains one of the leading causes of preventable death. Your role in reducing these statistics cannot be overstated. Every person you help to quit smoking adds years to their life, reduces the burden on the NHS, and creates a ripple effect that extends to families, workplaces, and communities. You are not just helping individuals—you are shaping a healthier society.

Your encouragement and expertise have the power to break generational cycles of smoking, ensuring that children grow up in smokefree homes and learn healthier habits from an early age. The ripple effect of your work goes beyond what you may see each day, influencing public health in ways that will be felt for generations to come.

### *A Fresh Start for You, Too*

While you dedicate yourself to supporting others, don't forget to take time for your own renewal. Spring is a wonderful opportunity to refresh your own motivation. Engage in self-care, celebrate your successes, and reconnect with the passion that brought you to this work in the first place. A well-rested and inspired advisor is an even greater force for change.

So, as you step into this new season, embrace the sense of renewal that spring brings. Remember the lives you've touched, the futures you've helped to shape, and the extraordinary impact of the work you do. Your efforts matter, and the world is a better place because of them. Keep going, keep inspiring, and keep making a difference—one smokefree life at a time.

*We are looking for your success stories, as real people make the best advocates for others to use your services. Please ask your patients or clients if they would be happy to share their story and we will contact them. Please send any perspective campaign stars to [smokefree@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:smokefree@n-somerset.gov.uk)*





## Meet the Team

This quarter we'd love to introduce to you one of our new team advisors Diane Dethal.



Hello,

I joined smokefree last November, I particularly enjoy my role due to the varied ways in which we deliver interventions. As well as supporting clients on a 1-1 basis via phone/video call from home or the Town Hall, I co-run 2 groups during the week and a drop-in session at the end of the week.

The best thing about my job is when a client achieves their goals and aspirations by successfully making a quit attempt. Many of our clients have made huge improvements to their lifestyle, some have booked holidays, renovated their homes and made other purchases with the money they have saved through quitting smoking, as well as improving personal relationships. One client informed me today that his girlfriend is 'chuffed' because his flat and car no longer smell of stale cigarette smoke!

Another great part of my role is the team that I work with, we all share the same vision, working towards a smoke free society!

My background is in counselling and throughout my counselling journey I have been inspired by the work of Gabor Mate and Carl Rogers, to name but a few! One particular quote that resonates with me is, '*The curious paradox is that when I accept myself just as I am, then I can change.*' Carl Rogers.

## Training Dates

# TRAINING



### 2 Day New Advisor Training

**Join us on Thursdays 27<sup>th</sup> March and 3<sup>rd</sup> April** for a 2-day training session that provides you with the skills to support people to quit smoking in North Somerset at Vision North Somerset. 3 Neva Road, Weston super Mare, BS23 2YD.

You will need to attend both days **9:30am - 4:30pm**

This training is suitable for anyone already working in a healthcare, educational or community service setting. Please share with colleagues and other interested parties and let us

know via email at [smokefree@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:smokefree@n-somerset.gov.uk) if you wish to book any places.

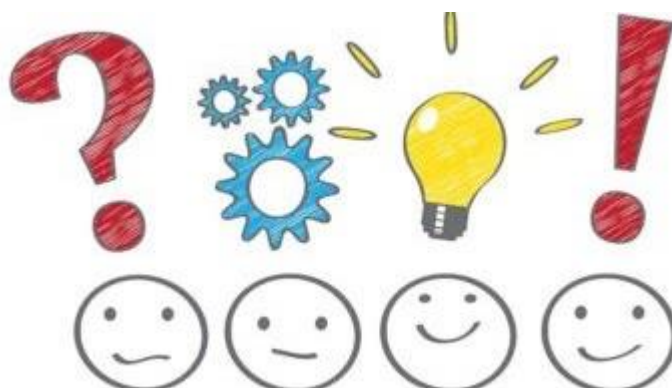
### Advisor Update Training

**Join us on Weds 16<sup>th</sup> April 12:30 – 4:30** for our biannual update, at The Hive, 6 Beaufighter Road, Weston-super-Mare, North Somerset, BS24 8EE.

Where we have a fabulous guest speaker Saraih Salim Sartoni, Health Psychologist and harm reduction expert, and all the latest news on medications and the world of tobacco control.

This training is suitable for all North Somerset Smokefree Advisors. Bring along your lunch, tea and coffee provided. Please share with colleagues and other interested parties and let us know via email at [smokefree@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:smokefree@n-somerset.gov.uk) if you wish to book any places.

## Advisor questions



### Question 1

I have a query re this patient. He seems to have built a tolerance to the medication, (varenicline) as he says he is still smoking 5/6 a day. He has exceeded the 8 days and I wondered what else you might suggest? He has come down dramatically from 20 a day, but my understanding is that he should be smoke free at this point.



## Answer

Yes, we would normally suggest a quit date of between day 8 and day 14 of the course, however some people can take a little longer, maybe up to 5 weeks and some even longer than that. A further course of 12 weeks can be prescribed for these patients as long as they have quit by the end of the first course (12 weeks).

Keep working with the patient, as taking longer is normal. Partly this will be down to biology and partly making the decision to take the step and quit. Some people expect magic to happen, which it isn't. Making a choice is definitely involved.

Try chatting about the ones he is still having and what is triggering this, work on those triggers together.

## Question 2

I just wondered if there was anything you would advise for patients experiencing nausea from Varenicline ?

I have one patient, since upping the dose to 1mg twice a day is struggling with nausea for a few hours after taking it.

She has tried ginger biscuits and that worked for a bit but not now. Hopefully, someone might have a suggestion.

## Question 2

Yes about a third of patients experience some sort of nausea, which usually resolves in time, especially when completely off tobacco.

Make sure the patient is leaving at least 12 hours between doses and takes the tablet with food.

If severe the dose can be reduced to half (0.5mg) until symptoms resolve.

Antiemetic medication can also be prescribed if none of the above work.



## Swap to stop

Just a reminder, if you have patients that would like a free vape and liquids and you are supporting and filling out an IRS form for you can email us their details. We will need:

Patient name

Address

DOB

Email and mob no

We will email them a link to order their vape.

## New Swap to Stop Portal

BNSSG Swap to Stop  
Portal

Click here to sign up for your free  
Swap to Stop kit.

Follow link



Alternatively, maybe you have a patient who just wants to “do it on their own” without support, but would still like a vape, you can direct these patients to our website and they can order a vape, and be followed up by the team at Totally Wicked (our vape supplier)

[Swap to Stop | Better Health North Somerset](#)

## Webinars

Some interesting webinars from ASH



[Webinar: Varenicline and cytisine - ASH](#)

[Webinar: Next steps for local tobacco control - ASH](#)

[Webinar: Supporting hidden populations with smoking cessation - ASH](#)

## ASH Briefings

[ASH-tobacco-tactics-briefing-Jan-2025.pdf](#)

[Smoking Statistics - ASH](#)



## Medications

Please use this link to access the latest info on all smoking cessation medications

[NCSCT e-learning](#)

## Targeted Lung Health Checks

Last autumn, North Somerset residents aged 55 to 74 who were current or former smokers were invited to join the NHS Targeted Lung Health Check programme. This national scheme identifies those at higher risk of lung cancer to enable earlier diagnosis when treatment is more effective, often before symptoms appear.

As part of the lung check, current smokers were offered referrals to Smokefree North Somerset for stop smoking support. Nearly 200 people requested help, leading us to create two support groups and continue to offer telephone support for those unable to attend the groups. Thank you to all those GP Advisors who also took on extra clients.

## Groups

The nine-week groups began with an overview of available support (NRT, vaping, Varenicline) and the session structure, including quitting preparation and setting a quit date. Having not run groups since before COVID-19, it was a great chance to refresh our facilitation skills and train team members who are new to group support.

As facilitators, we welcome everyone, guide discussions on staying smokefree, and encourage peer support, which is more impactful than advice from an advisor. We've had 2 wonderful groups of individuals attend, sharing their week's experiences, whether it is overcoming challenges to remain smokefree, reflecting on how they feel since quitting, or seeking support if they've slipped.

We're pleased that many attendees have become smokefree, finding the groups a valuable source of support as they didn't feel they were doing it alone. We've also been able to connect individuals to extra support by inviting the Healthy Lifestyles Team to discuss nutrition, fitness, and weight loss. We also welcomed Steve from Talk Club which offers support to men in discussing their mental health.

With this success the smokefree groups will be continuing with the opportunity for new members to join in the coming weeks.

If you have a patient who would like to join a group please contact Smokefree North Somerset on 01275 546744 or refer them online via: <https://www.betterhealthns.co.uk/self-refer-smokefree/> and add 'Would like group support' in the 'Anything else we should know?' section.

# QUIT IT

## Stop Smoking Group

**When?** Mondays, 6:30 - 7:30pm

**Where?** Hope Church

2 The Scaurs

Weston, BS22 6QP



**FREE support to quit for good**

Please call us to book your first session

Better  
Health

North  
Somerset



smokefree@n-somerset.gov.uk  
01275 546 744

# QUIT IT

## Stop Smoking Group

**When?** Thursdays, 1-2pm

**Where?** We Are Super Studios

The Sovereign

Weston, BS23 1HL



**FREE support to quit for good**

Please call us to book your first session

Better  
Health

North  
Somerset



smokefree@n-somerset.gov.uk  
01275 546 744



For more information on our Healthy Lifestyles Team please visit

<http://www.betterhealthns.co.uk/> or scan the QR code to make a referral



For more information on Talk Club please visit:

<http://talkclub.org/clubs/weston-super-mare-talking-group/> or scan the QR code for more information

## Data

We are coming to the end of quarter 4 of smoking cessation data, so a quick reminder to send us any outstanding IRS forms. We are still working on getting our system to extract from EMIS.

For those of you using Quit manager, please check through all your live clients and make sure any 4 week follow ups have been done, thanks





## Thank you

Once again, it's a big thank you from us for all the work you do to support people wanting to quit in North Somerset, remember we are here to support you in your work too, just give us a call or send an email, hope to see you all at the update training soon.