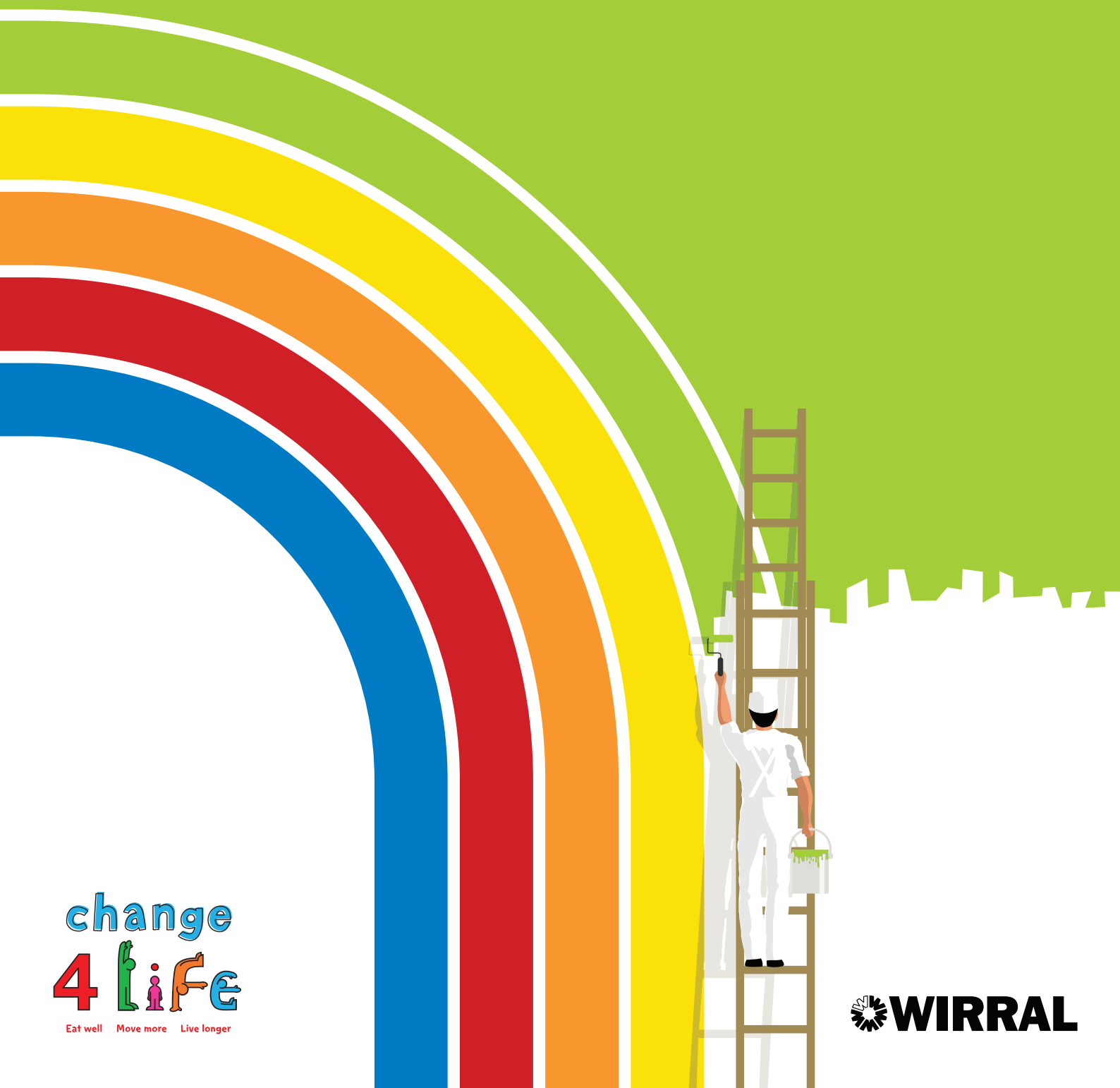


A breath of fresh air: reducing smoking and tobacco use in Wirral

NHS
Wirral

Wirral Public Health Annual Report 2009/10



change
4 life
Eat well Move more Live longer

 **WIRRAL**

An overview by the Joint Director of Public Health

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Welcome to the 2009/2010 joint public health report for Wirral, which focuses on smoking and tobacco control. In spite of the warnings and the very high cost of legitimate cigarettes, adults and, sadder still, many children and young people, continue to risk their health. It is disheartening to read that nationally, every year, 80,000 people die from smoking related diseases and 200,000 children take up the habit.

Smoking is the single biggest cause of inequality in death rates between rich and poor in the UK and accounts for over half of the difference in risk of premature death between social classes. In Wirral, smoking kills more than 600 people a year. We know that not only is smoking linked to a range of chronic and fatal conditions such as cardiovascular disease and cancer, but also that deaths from these diseases are higher in areas of deprivation, as is smoking prevalence (approximately 40% of the adult population in these areas smoke).

Targeting smoking interventions in disadvantaged communities, both in terms of prevention and treatment, has been identified as a priority in Wirral's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA), which collects vital health and wellbeing data. As well as establishing smoking trends, the JSNA collects information on other issues that affect health, such as poor housing, unhealthy diet, unemployment and alcohol misuse. This gathering of information helps us to direct resources effectively so that we can strive to meet the needs of the whole population in Wirral.

The importance of reducing smoking to narrow the gap in health inequalities was also a key finding from the Health Select Committee's (March 2009) inquiry into health inequalities. I am pleased to report that we have been successful in increasing the number of tobacco users from BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) communities seeking support to stop and, through the Advancing Quality programme, raised awareness among hospital staff and patients about the wide range of smoking cessation support which is freely available in the community. This is to encourage smokers to consider stopping for good following their discharge from hospital and has led to a noticeable increase in stop smoking referrals from Arrowe Park Hospital.

As you will read on pages 6 and 7 we set ourselves a number of challenges during the year. These included increasing the number of four-week quitters accessing stop smoking services by improving efficiency, and further protecting the health of children and young people through measures such as preventing the sale of tobacco to under 18s. Respected allies, like the cardiovascular disease prevention charity Heart of Mersey and Smokefree North West, greatly assisted our efforts through lobbying and advocacy at regional and national levels.

Encouraging parents and carers not to smoke around their children is another important area of our work and this led to the setting up of a successful Smokefree Homes and Cars campaign to highlight the danger of secondhand smoke.

I hope you will find this report interesting and informative and I welcome your feedback.



Marie Armitage

Joint Director of Public Health
NHS Wirral and Wirral Council

Smoking

Smoking is the biggest single cause of preventable illness and premature death in the UK.



The national picture

Nationally, almost one in five deaths is caused by smoking. It is the biggest single cause of preventable illness and premature death in the UK, with half of all smokers dying early as a result of their tobacco use. Smoking is linked to a range of chronic and debilitating conditions, such as cancers, heart disease and respiratory problems, and places a considerable burden on the NHS.

According to the charity ASH (Action on Smoking and Health):

- Around 9.4 million adults in Great Britain smoke cigarettes: 22% of men and 20% of women. Two-thirds of smokers start before the age of 18;
- Smoking causes almost 90% of deaths from lung cancer, around 80% of deaths from bronchitis and emphysema, and around 17% of deaths from heart disease;
- Smoking costs the NHS approximately £2.7 billion a year for treating diseases caused by smoking;
- Since the late 1990s there has been a fall in smoking among 11-15 year olds after at least two decades of little change. Children are more likely to smoke if their parents smoke and parents' attitudes to smoking is also an important factor;
- Children's exposure to secondhand smoke is most likely to take place in the home. Parental banning of smoking in the home is the only reliable way of reducing exposure to secondhand smoke as partial restrictions are not effective.

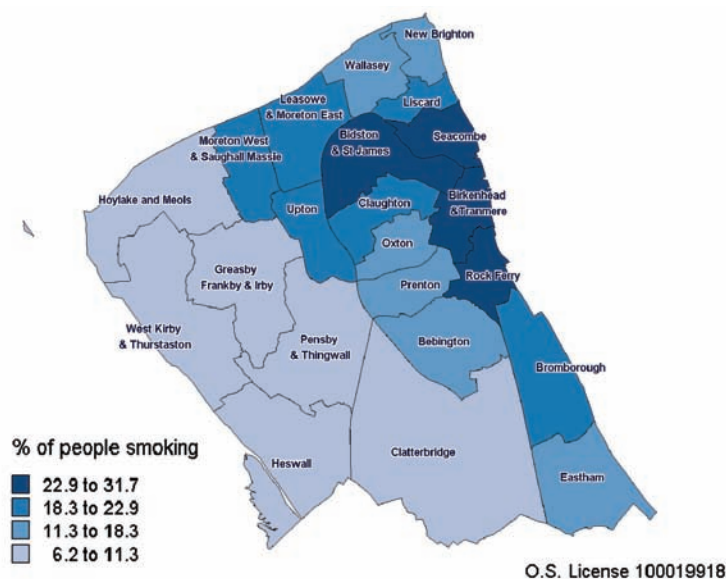
The Wirral picture

In Wirral, it is estimated that two people a day die as a result of smoking.

Around 22.8% of the adult population smoke (slightly lower than the regional average of 25%), but in the more deprived neighbourhoods it is thought that around 40% of the adult population smoke and up to 75% of children are living in a household where at least one parent/carer smokes.

The two maps opposite affirm that the highest rates of smoking prevalence are in the east of the borough, within Bidston and St. James, Seacombe, Birkenhead and Tranmere and Rock Ferry.

Smoking Prevalence from Home Safety Checks



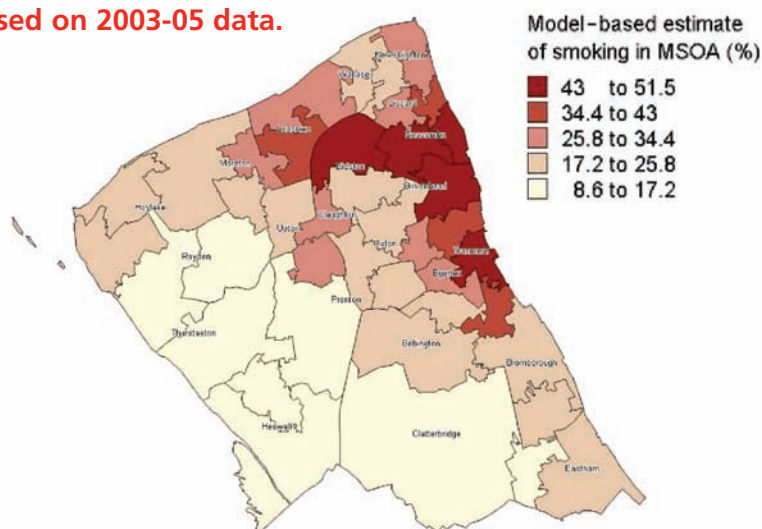
Source: Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service Home Fire Safety Check data, 2008

As Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service data shows (above), smoking follows a clear link with deprivation, with the four wards with the highest levels of deprivation showing the highest percentage of the population smoking, while the west of Wirral is much lower.

In the absence of many other sources of reliable recorded data on smoking prevalence, it is useful to look at other estimates such as that based on the latest Health Survey for England data from 2003-2005, even if this information is now dated. The map below shows Wirral estimates of smoking prevalence by Middle Layer Super Output Area (MSOA)*, 2003-05.

*MSOAs are standard geographical areas, each containing around 7,500 people. Wirral divides into 42 MSOAs and these are used for compiling statistics.

Model-based estimates of smoking by MSOA in Wirral, based on 2003-05 data.



Source: Information Centre, 2008

Although the Fire and Rescue Service map is based on new ward boundaries and the Health Survey for England estimates on MSOA, the two maps show a very similar trend, which is that smoking prevalence follows the pattern of deprivation.



The NHS Wirral Strategic Plan sets out a target of achieving 8,000 quitters per year. The overall aim is to reduce smoking prevalence in targeted neighbourhoods (20% most deprived areas):

3,000 – through the Wirral Stop Smoking Service;

5,000 – through a new social marketing campaign (*Your Reason, Your Way*).

Children and Young People

Around five million children in the UK are exposed regularly to secondhand smoke, which comes from the burning end of cigarettes, cigars or pipes and also from the smoke breathed out by a smoker.

It comprises nearly 4,000 different chemicals including 200 toxins, of which more than 60 are cancer-causing. Every year in the UK, 17,000 under fives are admitted to hospital because of secondhand smoke.

For these children the health risks include:

- Double the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS);
- Higher rates of bronchitis, asthma and chronic ear infections;
- Three times more risk of getting lung cancer in later life.

More Wirral children have tried smoking than compared with the UK average, a survey has shown. In the self-reported Tellus3 survey (2008 figures being the latest information available), 13% of Wirral pupils said they had smoked cigarettes once or twice compared with 11% nationally and only 69% of pupils said they had never smoked compared with 75% nationally. The priority, therefore, is to get to young smokers quickly and support them to quit, as well as trying to prevent young people starting in the first place.

Further information about smoking among young people was gathered by the independent organisation SHEU (Schools Health Education Unit).

SHEU'S latest survey (2008) of more than 2,000 Wirral pupils in Years 8 and 10 (at nine schools) found that:

- 40% have smoked at some point in their lives (55% of Year 10 girls);
- 7% smoke regularly (more than one cigarette a week);
- Girls are more likely to smoke in Years 8 and 10 than boys;
- 8% said they would relent and smoke if they were encouraged to do so by friends.



Smokefree Wirral

Wirral's strategy to reduce smoking, Smokefree Wirral, is a partnership between the NHS in Wirral, Wirral Council, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service and community organisations.

This partnership is chaired by the deputy director of public health, with two dedicated officers coordinating the Smokefree Wirral Implementation Plan (featured on pages 6 and 7). For a full list of members see page 29.

Smokefree Wirral aims to:

- Reduce smoking prevalence across Wirral;
- Reduce uptake of smoking by children and young people;
- Protect against the harmful effects of secondhand smoke.

The Smokefree Wirral Implementation Plan 2009-2010 sets out seven key priorities and actions for tackling smoking. The priorities have been met and in this joint report for Wirral we highlight these achievements. Also outlined are the challenges still facing Smokefree Wirral in both helping people to stop smoking and in dissuading others, particularly young people, from starting in the first place.

In August 2009 the Health and Wellbeing Partnership for Wirral invited organisations across the borough to become part of the Wirral Tobacco Control Alliance.

This is a virtual network operating via email with the purpose of:

- Sharing information relevant to smokefree and tobacco control issues across Wirral;
- Coordinating Wirral responses to national and regional requests for action, including lobbying and responses to consultations. This helps to secure support from MPs, for example in changing legislation around point of sale tobacco advertising and sales from vending machines;
- Supporting the North of England *Tackling Illicit Tobacco for Better Health* programme, which aims to reduce smuggled, counterfeit and illicit tobacco;
- Giving members the opportunity to be part of the development and delivery of the Smokefree Wirral Implementation Plan (detailed on pages 6 and 7);
- Enabling alliance members to communicate and share information on smokefree and tobacco control issues. Examples include promoting stop smoking services, highlighting forthcoming campaigns and enabling partnership-working to deliver on local action.



Smokefree Wirral Implementation Plan 2009-2010



Key priorities	Actions	Achieved
1. Increase the number of four-week quitters accessing stop smoking services to 3,000	Improve efficiency within the stop smoking service to increase the success rate of smokers attempting to quit.	✓
	Increase the number of front line staff attending stop smoking brief intervention training (in the Local Authority, NHS and external agencies).	✓
	Improve referral systems from organisations and agencies including the Local Authority and NHS.	✓
2. Increase the number of appropriate referrals from Arrowe Park Hospital to stop smoking services	Recruit a Health and Wellbeing lead to coordinate training and delivery of stop smoking services in Arrowe Park Hospital, with the aim of increasing the number of appropriate referrals from key clinical wards.	✓
	Identify training needs and gaps in referral process to stop smoking services for cardiac, respiratory and pre-operative assessment wards.	✓
	Decrease the number of pregnant women smoking through additional training and incentive scheme.	✓
3. Smokefree legislation	Enforce Smokefree legislation in Wirral and respond to complaints.	✓
4. Smokefree homes and cars	Train staff working with children, parents or guardians to encourage Smokefree homes and cars pledges.	✓
	Include Smokefree homes in healthy homes initiative.	✓

Key priorities	Actions	Achieved
5. Stop smoking social marketing campaign to reduce smoking prevalence in the more deprived areas of Wirral	Conduct research and generate insight into the needs and lifestyle of local smokers from disadvantaged areas.	✓
	Design and deliver a social marketing campaign, which is highly accessible to all smokers, with strong motivators to quit (web-based and local elements).	✓
	Conduct a neighbourhood survey of smoking prevalence and behaviour in disadvantaged areas.	✓
	Commission community champions from BME groups to promote campaign and reduce smoking prevalence in this population.	✓
6. Protect children and young people from tobacco use. Support lobbying processes for policy change in partnership with Smokefree North West and the cardiovascular disease prevention charity, Heart of Mersey	Decrease the number of underage sales from vending machines and retailers by coordinating test purchasing campaigns.	✓
	Enforce new legislation for underage sales.	✓
	Support work with the North of England <i>Tackling Illicit Tobacco for Better Health</i> .	✓
7. Third sector partnership and workplaces	Make links with third sector organisations and set up referral system to stop smoking services.	✓
	Generate support and publicise events and training.	✓



How the Smokefree Wirral priorities were met

1. Increasing the number of 4-week quitters accessing stop smoking services

For data collection purposes the Department of Health defines successful quitters as those who have remained smokefree for four weeks (although the stop smoking service continues to provide support for 12 months).

As well as delivering free specialist support to enable smokers to quit, Wirral Stop Smoking Service (SSS) provides training to other professionals such as practice nurses, pharmacists and school nurses to enable them to provide similar support to adults and young people within their own sphere of practice. These are referred to as intermediate advisors. There are 13 specialist advisors and more than 300 intermediate advisors. During the year, Wirral SSS made a concerted effort to improve its performance and increase the success rate of smokers attempting to quit.

The table below shows Wirral SSS annual quit rates from 2001/02 up to and including 2008/09.

Wirral SSS annual quit rates

Year	Quit Dates set	4 week quitters	Success rate	Pregnant quitters	BME clients accessing service
2001/2002	4448	2140	48%	17	24
2002/2003	4119	1867	45%	18	13
2003/2004	4134	2205	53%	35	10
2004/2005	5338	2507	47%	29	29
2005/2006	5482	2308	42%	30	42
2006/2007	4922	1940	39%	26	58
2007/2008	5860	2108	36%	12	84
2008/2009	5271	2359	45%	26	**389
2009/2010	4870	*2410	*49%	*45	*85

* Estimate as year end data not available until June 2010.

** Due to 'quit and win' campaign for BME groups.

Wirral's specialist stop smoking service has helped more than 16,000 people to stop smoking since it began over ten years ago. It has also achieved the Department of Health quit target for this area year-on-year.

In 2008/09, 5,271 people set a quit date and 2,359 successfully quit at four weeks (resulting in a quit rate of 44.4%). At the time of writing last year's figures are not complete, but 4,870 people set a quit date and it is estimated that of these, 2,410 will go on to remain smokefree for four weeks.

Services are widely available across Wirral in a variety of settings, including GP practices, most pharmacies, selected libraries, Birkenhead YMCA, Rock Ferry One Stop Shop and Victoria Central Hospital, to name but a few. To encourage people to attend, the service has strived to be as accessible as possible, with drop-in sessions and evening appointments available at some locations. Tranmere Rovers Football Club is one of the latest partners to support Smokefree Wirral out in the community (see page 23).

To increase the number of people able to help smokers quit, Wirral SSS provided Levels 1 and 2 training in smoking cessation to fellow professionals. The former covers brief intervention skills - updating their knowledge of tobacco; how best to raise the subject with smokers and appropriate referral (to stop smoking services). Level 2 (intermediate) enables professionals to provide intensive support and advice to smokers wanting to stop. This allows a school nurse or support worker, for example, to assess a client's nicotine dependence and their commitment to stop smoking and equips them to deliver an effective treatment programme with on-going support. The table below details year-on-year progress.

Year	Level 1		Level 2	
	No. Trained	Description of attendees	No. Trained	Description of attendees
2002/03	27	Practice Nurses	52	Practice Nurses
2003/04	13	"	70	"
2004/05	19	"	81	"
2005/06	199	Practice Nurses, Health Visitors, Oral Health, Youth Leaders	68	Practice Nurses, Health Care Assistants, Occupational Health, School Nurses, Pharmacists, Community Workers
2006/07	99	Including Student Nurses, Community Wardens, Psychiatric Nurses	105	Including Learning Mentors, Pharmacy Staff, Practice Nurses, Support Workers
2007/08	311	Including Mental Health Workers, Physiotherapy, Environmental Health and Connexions staff	130	Including Practice Nurses, Health Care Assistants, Occupational Health, School Nurses, Pharmacists, Community Workers



Health is the key driver for quitting by a distance, followed by money.

NHS Wirral Smoking Survey, December 2009



2008/09	278	Including Local Authority Staff, Mental Health Staff, BME Champions, School of Nursing	160	As above, including Health Trainers, Community Health Advisors
2009/10	39	Including Student Nurses, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease Nurses, Outpatients Department Staff at Arrowe Park Hospital	74	Including Practice Nurses, Health Care Assistants, Pharmacists, Pharmacy Staff, School Nurses, Community Health Advisors, and Nurses.

Satisfaction survey

A client satisfaction survey (by Wirral SSS) published in January 2010 confirmed that respondents were 'overwhelmingly satisfied' with the support they received from Wirral Stop Smoking Service.

The postal survey was aimed at smokers who quit between February and May 2009. All but one of the respondents (99%, 119/120) said they would recommend the service to other smokers who wanted to stop. Virtually all respondents said it had been easy to contact the service when they decided they wanted to stop smoking and all agreed that if they started smoking again they would go back to the service for help with stopping.

Quality outcomes

As part of the Quality Outcomes Framework, which is a performance framework for all GP practices in England, practices are asked to record how many smokers with a health condition, such as heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, diabetes and asthma for example, have been offered smoking cessation advice or have been referred to a specialist service. This information is shown in the table below.

Smokers with a health condition offered smoking cessation advice in the previous 15 months (2008/09)

Locality	Number of smokers with a health condition	Number offered smoking cessation advice	% offered smoking cessation advice
Wirral	14,422	13,332	92.44
Wallasey	3,631	3,299	90.86
Birkenhead	7,862	7,339	93.35
Bebington & West Wirral	2,929	2,694	91.98

Source: QMAS, 2009

In 2007/08, 12,735 Wirral residents were identified as being smokers with a health condition and 11,806 (92.7%) had been offered support to stop smoking. By 2008/09, this had increased to 14,422, of whom 13,332 were offered support to quit.

2. Increasing the number of referrals from Arrowe Park Hospital

Arrowe Park Hospital (Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust/WUTH) in partnership with NHS Wirral was among the first to pilot the Advancing Quality programme when it was launched in the North West in 2008.

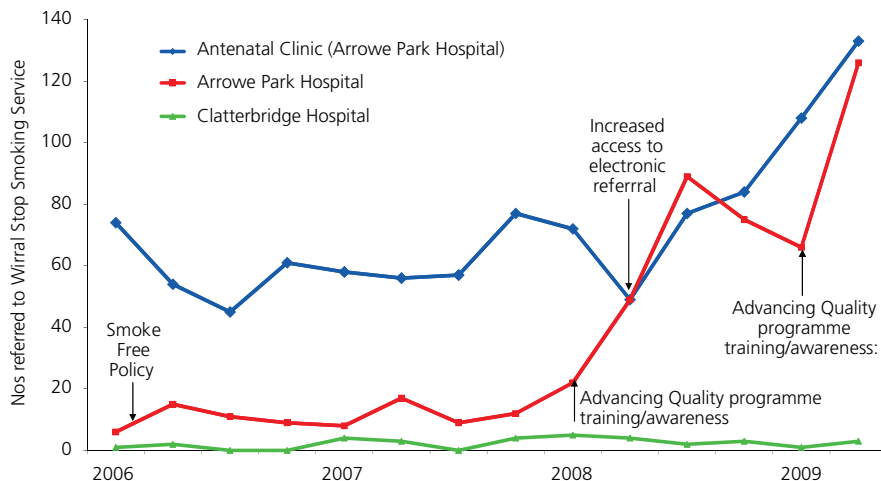
This incentive performance scheme (the funding is used to improve patient care and facilities) aims to ensure that patients have an overall better experience in hospital, which will ultimately result in them having a better health-related quality of life.

As part of the programme general advice about stopping smoking was introduced (and documented) to patients on cardiac, respiratory and pre-operative assessment wards. In the first six months of the programme more than 77% of Trust patients recovering from heart attacks and 50% of patients recovering from pneumonia received advice about stopping smoking and were referred to Wirral Stop Smoking Service.

In May 2009 an audit of the systems available to support smoking cessation within WUTH was conducted. This was followed in September 2009 by a survey among staff working on four key wards to establish if they were receiving the right information and training to help smokers stop. The findings pinpointed the need for sustained training for all staff from all departments. This led to a member of the Advancing Quality programme staff and a stop smoking advisor arranging a 'drop-in' day on one of the medical wards. The event provided staff with the information and resources they needed to offer brief intervention in the hospital setting. Over 50 members of staff attended and more events are planned.

All referrals to the stop smoking service are made electronically via the hospital Patient Care Information System. The number of referrals increased significantly following the introduction of the Advancing Quality programme in 2008 (as highlighted by the graph below).

Smoking Cessation Referrals since 2006





The steady increase in referral rates is attributed to the Advancing Quality programme and a greater awareness among staff of both the electronic referral system and the availability of Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) on the wards. In the three months from October 2008, the service received 164 referrals. This increased to 264 for the same period in 2009. The service also received referrals from wards it had not previously engaged with, such as orthopaedics and acute medical admissions, as well as the outpatients department. In just one click of the mouse the team knows whether a patient is thinking about stopping smoking or has stopped and wants motivational support. Either way, they get in touch before the patient changes his or her mind!

Smoking in pregnancy

Babies of mothers who smoke during pregnancy are more likely to be born prematurely and are twice as likely to have a low birth weight. Smoking in pregnancy is also associated with increased infant mortality.

The national target set in the White Paper *Smoking Kills* for reducing the number of women smoking during pregnancy to 15% has been achieved nationally, but remains a challenge for many primary care trusts in the North West, where prevalence of smoking in pregnancy is currently at 20%.

Reducing smoking during pregnancy by one percentage point a year is a key deliverable in the Public Service Agreements (PSA) Delivery Agreement 18: *Promote better health and wellbeing for all*.

In 2008/09 (the latest figures available for Wirral), 14.7% of pregnant women smokers were still smoking at the time of delivery (the rate is higher in areas of deprivation), however, smoking prevalence at this crucial time has been decreasing year-on-year.

Since December 2009 all pregnant smokers attending Arrowe Park Hospital antenatal clinics are automatically referred to stop smoking services via the Patient Care Information System. Midwives, who are ideally placed to support mums-to-be with quitting, have been encouraged to update their stop smoking knowledge and skills through the NHS Smokefree toolkit. Lifestyle and smoking are also addressed at every antenatal meeting when mums-to-be are encouraged to plan for a smokefree environment before taking their baby home.

Up to 70% of pregnant women who quit smoking during pregnancy relapse within one year after the birth of their baby. A growing number of studies suggest that incentive schemes like 'voucher based reinforcement therapy' (VBRT), in which women earn retail vouchers in exchange for a sustained quit attempt (verified by carbon monoxide readings), provide compelling evidence that positive reinforcement leads to positive changes in behaviour.

A VBRT scheme has recently been piloted in the North West with pregnant smokers.

3. Enforcing smokefree legislation

On 1 July 2007 virtually all enclosed public places and workplaces in England became smokefree, making it illegal to smoke in pubs, bars, nightclubs, cafés, restaurants, shopping centres and other public places. The same applies on public transport and in work vehicles. The law was introduced not only to protect smokers, but also those around them who are at risk of developing lung cancer and heart disease from breathing in secondhand smoke.

Under the law, employers, managers and those in charge of smokefree premises and vehicles are required to:

- Display 'no smoking' signs in smokefree premises;
- Take reasonable steps to ensure that staff, customers and visitors are aware that premises and vehicles are legally required to be smokefree;
- Ensure that people do not smoke in smokefree premises or vehicles.



'Some taxi drivers don't seem to understand that if they have registered their taxi as a business, it is against the law to smoke in it even when they are off duty. Ignoring the law could cost them a fine of up to £200 or even a prosecution.'

Ann Downey, Wirral Council's Senior Technical Officer.

Since the advent of Smokefree England, Wirral Council has responded to approximately 1,500 calls from the public about smokefree issues. Some of these were general enquiries, but a significant number were callers reporting people who were clearly flouting the law. They included a number of taxi drivers, small businesses and school bus drivers who failed to heed the legislation.

Wirral Council Environmental Health's enforcement officers have continued to work closely with businesses to build compliance through education, advice and support.

From 1 April 2009 to date, officers carried out 684 inspections, including visits to more than 200 restaurants as well as licensed premises, fast food outlets and catering businesses. The visits yielded 15 non-conformances (no signs) which were corrected following a verbal warning. Licensing officers also carried out 780 vehicle inspections (on taxis) and more than 200 on licensed premises. Nine fixed penalties were issued where people were observed smoking and one pub/restaurant was facing prosecution after allowing customers to smoke on the premises.



How to protect children from secondhand smoke:

- Make your home and car smokefree;
- Display the Smokefree Homes Pledge;
- Don't allow others to smoke in your home or car;
- Until you are ready to quit, smoke outside.

4. Smokefree homes and cars

The health risks associated with secondhand smoke are considerable. Secondhand smoke in the home is the main source of exposure for children; it can impair lung function and increases their risk of developing asthma. It can also increase a child's risk of chronic obstructive airway disease and cancer in adulthood (ASH, 2007).

As part of the latest Residents' Survey (2008), Wirral smokers were asked about their habit. Fifty-nine per cent (121) said they smoked in the home, although of these 37% said that they confined it to just one room. The remainder said they either didn't smoke in the house or went outside to light up.

As well as the health risks, smoking in the home also presents a fire hazard. Every year in the UK it causes more than 5,000 house fires. A scheme which encourages parents and carers not to smoke around their children has been gathering momentum.

Wirral Smokefree Homes Pledge motivates parents and carers to keep their children and their home safe.



'There are clear links between secondhand smoke and chest infections and asthma in children,'

Andrea Crossfield, Director, Smokefree North West, the body that leads the region's work on protecting children and young people from tobacco harm.



Kelly Andrews took the Smokefree Homes Pledge to protect her twins, Ryan and Michael.

A number of teams have been trained both in the health effects of secondhand smoke and in the process of signing people up to the pledge, which commits people to keeping their home smokefree. The initiative not only aims to protect families from the effects of secondhand smoke, it also aims to reduce the number of house fires caused by smoking in the home and support smokers who want to quit.

Keeping track of clients' progress is an important aspect of the programme. Two weeks after the initial contact has been made, a client is re-contacted to complete a Smokefree questionnaire (the two-week follow up also alerts staff to any other issues that might require referral to other services). The exercise is repeated at six months to establish if there have been any changes in knowledge, behaviour and understanding and any noticeable health benefits as a result of taking the pledge.

In the first two months of the scheme 48 Smokefree Homes Pledges were made. For many families in Wirral that has meant making a conscious effort to make their car and house (or at least a number of rooms) smokefree. Anyone who takes the pledge automatically qualifies for a complementary Smokefree Homes resources pack and also benefits from a free home fire safety check and a fitted smoke alarm.

What smokers say about their habit

A survey of 200 Wirral adult smokers carried out in December 2009 showed that the majority had been smoking for their whole adult life. The survey was carried out to establish people's smoking habits and make recommendations to increase quit attempts.

The findings show that:

- Smoking is deeply engrained from a very young age – a number had been smoking for over 30 years;
- Just over half (53%) said they were concerned about smoking and 54% said they wanted to quit;
- Around 1 in 5 said they planned to quit within the next 6 months or less;
- Heavy smokers were most likely to say they don't intend to quit at all.

The survey found that the most important reason for quitting was health (61%), with the cost of smoking being a fairly low consideration (8%). The key reason given for not quitting was enjoyment of the habit (61%). Many of the interviewees were receptive to the idea of quitting and were aware of the health benefits of doing so, however, enjoyment, stress relief and low self-esteem kept them smoking.

- 75% were already in the cycle of repeat quit attempts;
- 63% had tried to quit using personal willpower alone ;
- 4 in 10 could not think of any tactics they had used to help them before;
- Keeping busy and replacing smoking with something else (such as food or gum) were the most popular tactics;
- Quit tips were of most interest to those with the strongest intent to quit;
- The majority were aware that services are available, but did not know the details of these, and 69% had not used any of them;
- The likelihood of using services was in line with knowledge of what is available – most mentioned GP or pharmacy as familiar options;
- Many believed they knew how to get the support they needed - yet services beyond GP were not uppermost in their mind, which acted as a barrier.

Smokers think they know what is available, yet knowledge of options is limited. There is a need to proactively take support out to smokers as they are not choosing to seek help.

NHS Wirral Smoking Survey, December 2009.



Smokers don't want to be told how to quit. They want ownership of their quit attempt, they want to design their own service to suit them as an individual – not as a smoker only.

NHS Wirral Smoking Survey, December 2009



5. Stop Smoking Social Marketing Campaign to reduce smoking prevalence in areas of Wirral with poorest health

The quit rate for people stopping smoking with the stop smoking service is lowest in the most disadvantaged wards in Wirral. Against a Wirral average of 45%, success rates are lower in Bidston (27.4%); Birkenhead (32%), Leasowe (32.9%) and Tranmere (28.3%). Reducing smoking prevalence in these areas of deprivation is a key target within the NHS Wirral Strategic Plan.

On 1 February 2010 a targeted social marketing stop smoking campaign was launched, focusing on smokers within the 20% most deprived areas of Wirral. *Your Reason, Your Way* set out to recruit 2,000 smokers to the campaign by March 2010 and achieve 5,000 quitters per year thereafter. It aims to achieve these targets by providing a service designed around the needs of the individual, making it user-led with additional support from stop smoking services if required.

The campaign was informed by a smoking prevalence survey carried out in November 2009. A total of 3,407 adults were interviewed. As well as providing information on the current levels of smoking, the survey also aimed to provide data on a number of aspects of smoking behaviour and lifetime smoking habits (see table below and graph on page 17).

Although half the smokers interviewed said they were concerned about their smoking and wanted to quit (75% having tried to in the past), a large proportion tried to stop smoking unaided without even attempting to access traditional stop smoking services.

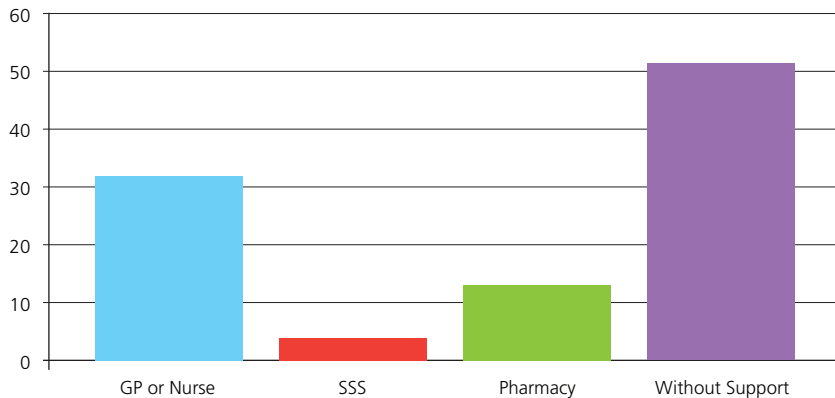
Smoking Prevalence Survey 2009

Number of residents surveyed from 20% most deprived areas	3,407
Overall smoking prevalence	34.7%
Daily smokers	32.4%
Average number of years smoking	nearly 24 years
Routine and manual workers - smoking prevalence	38.3%
Black Minority Ethnic (BME) - smoking prevalence	29.4%

Of the respondents, 1,181 (34.7%) were smokers. Of these, 452 (32.6%) men smoked daily and 645 (32.2%) were women who smoked each day. All the smokers had made attempts to stop smoking, with men attempting to quit more than women overall. Method of quit attempts (lasting longer than four weeks) varied from relying on willpower to GP/practice nurse intervention. More women than men sought professional help with quitting, except in BME communities, where access was low across the board.

How smokers quit

Methods of quit attempts lasting more than four weeks



Using incentives to trigger quit attempts and maintain quit status has proven to be a cost effective way of reducing smoking prevalence. This approach was adopted successfully by Wirral's BME incentive scheme (described on page 18) and Smokefree North West is co-ordinating an incentive scheme for primary care trusts to encourage pregnant women to quit. The latter has been piloted and shown to be a cost effective approach.

Your Reason, Your Way works in partnership with a local Asda store - whose staff are champions for the campaign - and taps into popular social networking sites, such as Facebook, to reach a wider audience.

The campaign offers:

- Incentives to encourage participation;
- One-to-one support available outside normal working hours;
- A mobile trailer which smokers can access in their own locality;
- A dedicated website (www.yourreasonyourway.co.uk) and online forum where smokers can share quit tips and quitters can support each other;
- Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) free at point of access.

Another survey will be completed at the end of April 2010 and again in February 2011 to evaluate the campaign. The number of four-week quitters registered through the campaign will be monitored by postcode area, age, occupation, gender and ethnicity.

In addition to the prevalence survey, a cohort of at least 600 smokers will be surveyed annually to monitor quit behaviour. This will inform NHS Wirral of the number of quit attempts a smoker makes in a year, the methodology they are using (for example, NRT, willpower, stop smoking services) and the success rate of each. This will assist in monitoring the effects of the social marketing campaign and will also inform current service provision of a smoker's journey to quitting.



Supporting members of BME communities to quit



Among the successful quitters is Mrs. Syeda Kasa Bibi (pictured left).

'Before Nurie and Azmira came to see me I was not even aware of the health dangers of chewing paan. They showed me pictures of people who had mouth cancer from the paan and that frightened me. I decided then in the name of Allah not to use it again... It has benefited me now as I have stopped taking it completely.'

Stop smoking advisors face several hurdles when trying to help smokers from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities to quit. A general lack of awareness about the dangers of tobacco use - particularly chewing tobacco - language and cultural differences, plus low levels of engagement with GPs, are just some of the challenges that must be addressed. Simply replicating existing services is not enough.

In 2009 an incentive-based stop smoking campaign resulted in more than 300 BME people quitting. The campaign was coordinated in response to Wirral's Local Area Agreement, *Getting Better Together* (2006/07 - 2008/09). BME smokers were identified as being low users of stop smoking services and the challenge was to support 114 four-week quitters over three years.

NHS Wirral commissioned a Quit and Win initiative entitled *4 weeks, 4 rewards*. The scheme encouraged smokers/tobacco users to work towards staying stopped for a minimum of four weeks through a system of weekly rewards. The value of each reward, which ranged from supermarket vouchers to phone cards, grew each week to sustain interest.

Since cultural differences require a different approach to the delivery of standard stop smoking services, gaining an insight into the barriers experienced by BME smokers/tobacco users was a key component. Two stop smoking advisors delivered the service in partnership with community 'ambassadors' who drew on their local knowledge and networking skills to engage with residents. The ambassadors received smoking cessation training to enable them to give effective support and advice. Sessions were delivered in a variety of settings including restaurants, ethnic food stores, building sites, market stalls and clients' homes.

The campaign increased the number of BME smokers accessing the service. On average the service usually achieves between 25 and 30 BME quits a year, but *4 weeks, 4 rewards* signed up 436 smokers and tobacco users and 326 (76%) were not smoking at the four-week target. A six-month follow up of the 56 who quit in January 2009 confirmed that 39 had remained smokefree.

Within some communities – as trust and confidence in the service grew - there was a noticeable increase in requests for home visits to help female smokers addicted to chewing tobacco.

This model has been replicated to support the *Your Reason, Your Way* campaign and four community champions are recruiting tobacco users from Asian, Arabic, Chinese and Polish communities.

6. Protecting children and young people from tobacco use

Children who smoke are more likely to develop health problems, a cough, wheeziness and shortness of breath. The earlier they start, the more likely they are to carry the habit into adulthood, putting themselves at risk of cancer, cardiovascular disease and stroke.

Developing close working relationships with local schools is paramount and has led to strong links with a range of professionals who come into contact with young people during the course of their work. Examples of this joint working included:

- In July 2009 Wirral Stop Smoking Service (SSS) worked closely with West Kirby Grammar School for Girls on one of their dedicated health days. The service was invited to deliver lesson plans to girls in Years 8, 9 and 10. These covered, among other topics, the detrimental effects of smoking on the skin, and the health and financial benefits of quitting. The sessions had a knock-on effect. Shortly afterwards a number of parents contacted the service for help with stopping smoking. The team is aiming to repeat the exercise in other schools in 2010. One consideration is to link with Year 6 pupils before they make the transition to secondary school;
- In December 2009 a Wirral stop smoking advisor who specialises in supporting young people was asked to work with three primary school pupils who smoke. The referrals were made by the school nurse following consultation with the children's parents;
- A link was established with the community constable for Rock Ferry High School. Trained as an intermediate advisor through Wirral SSS, the constable provided brief interventions to young people on the playground, using visual aids like the carbon monoxide monitor (smokerlyser) to provide visible proof of damaging CO levels in the blood caused by smoking. There are plans to replicate this initiative at other high schools in 2010.

Stop smoking support, including advice about Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT), is available from school nurses in all 29 secondary schools. In some schools, sessions are held weekly and offer one-to-one appointments or group sessions with either a school nurse or a stop smoking advisor from Wirral SSS. In the run up to National No Smoking Day 2009 the service was widely promoted in Wirral secondary schools. Some held dedicated assemblies to raise awareness.

A child is three times more likely to smoke if a parent smokes.

Cancer Research UK



'It has been a great partnership, one which we are keen to continue. The smoking awareness sessions were very, very effective. We didn't have a massive problem with smoking, but we were aware that some pupils were smoking and we didn't want them to feel intimidated or labelled. Pupils were quite shocked when they breathed through a straw to see the effect that smoking has on the lungs.'

Ann Hodgson,
Ridgeway Year Manager

Among them was Ridgeway High School Business and Enterprise College in Prenton where students took centre stage to emphasise the benefits of stopping smoking. The students - six Year 11 pupils - turned to Wirral SSS for support after electing to share their experiences and highlight the dangers of smoking with fellow students during a series of school assemblies. The school's head of science supported them with a power point presentation.



Stop smoking advisor Natalie Johnston is pictured with Ridgeway pupils at one of the weekly lunchtime smoking awareness sessions held during the 2009 Summer term. Targeted information, visual aids and the carbon monoxide testing machine resulted in an 'amazing' response from students, with requests for stop smoking information for themselves and family members and friends. It was also an opportunity to raise the issue of passive smoking with pupils. Wirral SSS noted an increase in requests for help from parents following the sessions.

Linking with youth training providers

Since September 2009 Wirral SSS has been working closely with organisations like Connexions, Entry to Employment (E2E) and other youth training providers to promote the stop smoking service to 13-18 year olds. Reaching vulnerable, hard-to-reach groups is a priority for the service. Working with the independent training provider Quality Training Services in Birkenhead, Wirral's stop smoking advisors helped at least two out of a group of six young male smokers to quit. Another group started soon afterwards and this pilot may be rolled out to other local training providers.

Wirral SSS also provided training and resources to youth workers so that they were suitably equipped to help young people make informed choices about smoking. Young smokers who sought help to stop were subsequently referred into the service.

Extended Health Services in Wirral Secondary Schools

During the year NHS Wirral provided funding to extend health and wellbeing services in Wirral secondary schools. These services included support to stop smoking. As a drop-in service, it meant students could consult a health professional at certain times within the school day without disrupting their studies

Cheap and Illicit Tobacco

A North West study of 3,000 11-17 year olds found that over half regularly bought cigarettes with health warnings displayed in another language and over a quarter had knowingly bought 'fake' cigarettes (*North of England Cheap and Illicit Health Action Plan, 2008*). Experts say this encourages smokers to maintain their habit and tempts children and young people to take up smoking.

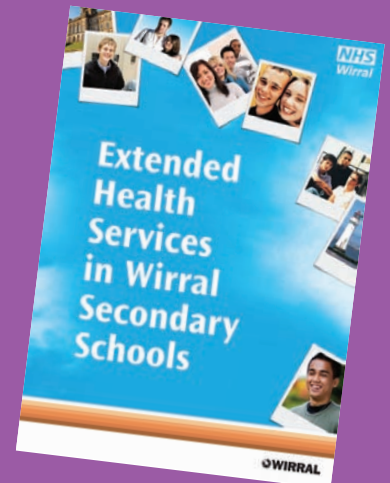
Illicit tobacco has links to organised crime and is a major obstruction in supporting people to stop smoking and in reducing the number of young people taking up the habit. It is estimated that, nationally, one in six stick cigarettes smoked is illicit (*HM Revenue and Customs, 2006*).

Cheap and illicit tobacco also undermines tobacco control measures, such as health warnings on packaging. In August 2009, in a joint raid with HM Revenue and Customs, Wirral Trading Standards seized more than 10,000 illegal cigarettes and 1.5 kilos of hand rolling tobacco from a shop in Birkenhead. Trading Standards is now equipped with an electronic scanner to improve testing for counterfeit cigarette packaging.

Increased sanctions

Since 1 April 2009 it is illegal to sell tobacco products to anyone under 18. Tobacco retailers in Wirral have received guidance from Trading Standards on their legal responsibilities and anyone flouting the law faces criminal prosecution and a possible fine of up to £20,000.

During the year under review one trader was prosecuted and fined £600 with £490 costs for selling cigarettes to a 15-year old volunteer. At the time of writing, proceedings will also be brought against a retailer for selling cigarettes to another underage volunteer. In addition, two retailers received a formal caution for selling cigarettes to minors.



Although much has been achieved in tobacco control in recent years, every year more than 80,000 people still die from smoking related diseases in England and more than 200,000 children take up the habit.

Heart of Mersey

Vending machines

Although it is illegal to sell tobacco products to anyone under 18, a survey by Wirral Trading Standards has shown just how easy it has been for young people to buy cigarettes from pub vending machines. In six out of 13 pubs visited, a 14-year old volunteer was able to buy cigarettes from the machines. Only one pub asked the teenager for proof of age. Four premises had the machines turned off, although in one pub the volunteer even managed to turn it on at the wall and put money in without being challenged. Two other pubs would have also allowed the 14-year old to purchase cigarettes, except the coins were rejected by the machine. The proprietors were advised on a number of counts, including ensuring that their vending machine displayed the required statutory notice and keeping the machine switched off until a customer requested to buy cigarettes, enabling staff to check that person's age.

On 12 October 2009, MPs voted by 288 to 108 to banish tobacco point of sale displays from retail outlets and for the removal of cigarette vending machines as part of the Health Bill 2009. It followed many months of relentless campaigning to raise awareness and to lobby MPs to support the regulatory measures in the new bill. It was one of the most robustly fought campaigns of recent times to protect the health of children and young people.

Online tobacco advertising

A member of staff from NHS Wirral volunteered as the regional lead for online tobacco test purchasing. It meant that Wirral Trading Standards took the lead for 22 local authorities and worked in partnership with other lead officers throughout the country to conduct a series of test purchases and website inspections to check for compliance with tobacco advertising restrictions, and to establish how easily people could purchase tobacco online. From the work carried out, Trading

Standards noted that not all sites complied with the advertising requirements under the Tobacco Advertising and Promotion Act 2002 and most did not display any health warnings or age restrictions. A report detailing the findings has been prepared.



7. Third Sector Partnership and Workplaces

Tranmere Rovers Football Club teamed up with NHS Wirral to provide a community venue where smokers can seek help to quit.

The service initially started as a 12-week drop-in pilot in January 2009, but proved so successful it continued on a weekly basis and now offers appointments too. The service is free and trained advisors offer one-to-one or group support; advice on a range of treatments available and on-going support for up to 12 weeks with follow-ups for 12 months. One of the spin-offs is that the club has made links with the local NHS health trainer programme, which provides people with one-to-one support to make other lifestyle changes too, such as improving their diet or losing weight.

Avon Buses, established 30 years ago, is a large independent bus operator in Wirral. In 2009 they invited Wirral Stop Smoking Service to set up a workplace clinic for employees who wanted to quit. The company offered to pay for all Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) prescriptions for the first 12 weeks.

For several months a stop smoking workplace advisor (from Groundwork Wirral*) provided weekly on-site support on a one-to-one basis. Ten drivers attended the workplace sessions, resulting in a 70% success rate. At the time of writing, most of the drivers have been stopped for five months.

*NHS Wirral provides funding to Groundwork Wirral to employ a stop smoking advisor to work with small businesses. It's another opportunity to connect with smokers.



Mike Grant (seated), Community Health Advisor with Rock Ferry, Tranmere and Central Birkenhead Health Action Area, is pictured with Tranmere's Terry Gornell, Luke Daniels and Joe Collister.



Barry Jones (pictured left, back row) quit smoking for health reasons. For John Davies (front row) the money he saves is incentive enough.

'Apart from the obvious health and financial benefits, the staff who have become smokefree feel motivated and proud of their achievements and generally feel a sense of freedom and wellbeing.'

Company partner
George Lewis

Although smoking rates are declining, the epidemic is far from solved, with more than 80,000 deaths a year attributed to smoking. Smoking costs the NHS £2.7 billion a year and our communities much more.

Department of Health,
February 2010

They did it!

Bus driver Barry Jones quit using nicotine replacement chewing gum on 28 June, 2009 for health reasons.

Barry, who until then had been an 80-a-day smoker, said: **'I can now taste food. I feel fitter and I don't feel tied down by wanting cigarettes.'** Barry's advice to smokers thinking about quitting is: **'Do it. Do it now – there is no greater feeling than being free.'**

Workplace stop smoking clinics are usually the preferred option for people with busy working lives. Many smokers have been supported to quit this way during the year, including a number of Wirral Council staff.

'Having the programme within your workplace makes everything so much easier. Also, the regular support given by the advisor, Pauline, was great,' said Nigel Jenkins from Technical Services, who smoked for 42 years. **'My life no longer revolves around when and where I can have a smoke.'**

If you are an employer, you can help your staff stop smoking for free. Workplace clinics make it easier for employees to get help with stopping smoking. One or more stop smoking advisors will arrange to visit your workplace once a week at a date and time convenient to all concerned. Call 0151 630 8383 for more information.

The future

Tobacco control strategy

On 1 February 2010 an ambitious new strategy to halve the number of smokers, from 21 to 10 per cent of the population by 2020, was announced by the Department of Health. Under the strategy more smokers will be encouraged to seek support from the NHS, where professional help will be even more accessible and a wider range of options will be available to suit everybody.

Health Secretary Andy Burnham said: **'Today's strategy renews our commitment to virtually eradicate the health harms caused by smoking, and I firmly believe we can halve smoking by 2020. In ten years' time, only one in ten people will smoke.'**

'We will always help people to quit, and smokers should never stop trying. That's the beauty of the NHS – it's there to help everyone. One day, in the not too distant future, we'll look back and find it hard to remember why anyone ever smoked in the first place.'

And finally...thank you

On 18 September 2009 NHS North West, the regional health authority, marked a celebration for the 10-year anniversary of the Stop Smoking Service with an awards ceremony. NHS Wirral won two of the seven categories – the Innovation in Services/Tobacco Control Award and the Stop Smoking Specialist Award.

Mike Donnelly won the award for Innovation for his commitment to a campaign to get more people from hard-to-reach BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) communities to access the service. He went the extra mile to overcome language and cultural barriers to make it a success. As you have read elsewhere in this report, it involved finding community champions to deliver stop smoking sessions in busy restaurants, takeaways, ethnic food stores and people's homes.

The campaign, in 2009, ran for four months and resulted in a large increase in people accessing the service and quitting as a result. Mike also represented NHS Wirral during a celebratory reception in the House of Commons to mark the 10th anniversary.

Sue Smethurst, joint winner of the Stop Smoking Specialist Award, has worked for Wirral Stop Smoking Service since 2000 and has been a great inspiration for the team. Sue's professionalism and creativity resulted in a range of well researched training programmes for stop smoking staff across the public, private and voluntary sectors. Thanks to Sue, more than 300 people have been trained in delivering this essential service across Wirral.



Mike Donnelly with his award for Innovation



Sue Smethurst, joint winner of the Stop Smoking Specialist Award

Want to stop smoking?

Smoking is the biggest threat to health, but if you want to stop, Wirral is the place to be!

Why stop?

Firstly, smoking doubles your risk of getting heart disease and cancer, so giving up is one of the best things you can do. Secondly, there are nearly 4,000 chemicals found in cigarette smoke - more than 60 are carcinogenic (cancer causing). One of these is formaldehyde – the toxic chemical used to preserve dead bodies.



You are four times more likely to stop smoking successfully if you use NHS support.

Tips to help you quit

- Prepare to stop – choose a date and really focus on wanting to stop on that day;
- Change your habits; think about why, when and where you smoke and alter your routine as much as possible;
- Take one day at a time and think to yourself, *I won't smoke today*;
- Remind yourself why you want to stop smoking;
- Avoid situations where you know you will be tempted to smoke;
- Reward yourself with treats using the money you've saved;
- Think about the benefits – better health, more money, smelling fresh.

You are up to four times more likely to stop smoking successfully if you use NHS support. You might think it's hard to stop when everyone around you still seems to be smoking, but every year thousands of people stop ...and stay stopped! Wirral has a team of specialist advisors who can help you through every aspect of quitting, through one-to-one appointments or group sessions. They can also help you decide on the best Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) for you.

Benefits of stopping smoking

After

- 20 minutes:** your blood pressure and pulse return to normal;
- 8 hours:** nicotine and carbon monoxide levels in your blood are halved;
- 24 hours:** carbon monoxide will be eliminated from your body and your lungs will have started to clear out the tar that's been clogging them up;
- 48 hours:** no nicotine left in your body. Your sense of taste and smell are greatly improved;
- 72 hours:** breathing becomes easier and your energy levels increase;
- 2-12 weeks:** circulation improves and exercise can be easier.

The financial benefits of stopping soon add up too

- 1 day:** £5.80 = a movie rental or a few magazines;
- 1 week:** £40.60 = a cheap flight abroad, a few DVDs or games;
- 1 month:** £176 = a shopping spree or the monthly food bill;
- 3 months:** £528 = two weeks in the sun or a new laptop;
- 6 months:** £1,056 = a family holiday or a home cinema;
- 1 year:** £2,111 = a secondhand car or the start of a deposit for a house.

If you would like help to stop smoking please call **0151 630 8383** and ask for the **Wirral Stop Smoking Service**. Alternatively, you can email **wsupport@wirral.nhs.uk** or you can talk to your GP, practice nurse or local pharmacist.

If you are an employer, you can help your staff quit smoking for free.



Websites

Wirral's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (*Wirral – The Big Picture*) contains additional information and statistics about smoking and other health and wellbeing issues. This is available at

<http://info.wirral.nhs.uk/>

Information on smoking and tobacco is also available at:

www.wirral.nhs.uk/yourhealth

www.nhs.uk/smokefree

www.nosmokingday.org.uk

www.roycastle.org

www.passivesmokingkills.org

www.cleanairaward.org.uk

www.bhf.org.uk/smoking

www.ash.org.uk

www.heartofmersey.org.uk

www.smokefreeaction.org.uk

www.smokefreenorthwest.org

www.gasp.org.uk

Young people can also get support and advice from the dedicated young people's website **www.kooth.com**

and from a recent Department of Health campaign

www.percypenguinontour.blogspot.com

Our Thanks

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Oliver Adam, Wirral CVS Volunteer Representative

Phil Baines, Health Promotion Strategy Manager, NHS Wirral

Robert Beresford, Head of Regulation, Regeneration Department, Wirral Council

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Helen Patterson, Practice Educational Facilitator, Clinical Skills Department, WUTH

Neil Perris, Head of Provider Services, NHS Wirral

If you would like to comment on this report please contact the **Have Your Say** team on **freephone 0800 085 1547**, or email haveyoursay@wirral.nhs.uk

April 2010

If you would like a copy of this report in another format such as Braille, large print, audio cassette or CD, or in another language, please call 0151 651 0011, extension 6039.

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Public Health Directorate
NHS Wirral
Old Market House
Hamilton Street
Birkenhead
Wirral
CH41 5FL
Tel: 0151 651 0011
email: haveyoursay@wirral.nhs.uk

www.wirral.nhs.uk

