

## **The role of healthcare professionals in treating tobacco dependency: opportunities to reduce CVD for commissioners and practitioners.**

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### **Treating tobacco dependency is a priority for the NHS.**

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidance on cardiovascular disease ([www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph25](http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph25)) identifies smoking as a significant contributing factor and recommends that any intervention to reduce risk should include referrals for smoking cessation.

The vision of the new Tobacco Control Plan for England is that every clinician knows the smoking status of each patient and has the competence and the commitment to enable patients to quit through direct action or referral.

Helping smokers to quit is the job of the whole health and care system. As smokers experience a greater incidence of poor health and disease, they will already be regularly engaging with the health system. We must exploit these opportunities and make every contact count

Promoting smoking cessation is the most effective thing a clinician can do to improve health outcomes for patients who smoke. It is also one of the most effective ways of triggering a quit attempt. All smokers should be offered stop smoking advice and referral to evidenced based support at all relevant points in their journeys through the health system.

Comprehensive and effective local tobacco control strategies require joined up working and integrated commissioning between local government and the NHS.

#### Key messages:

- There is almost always an opportunity to talk to your patients about smoking. **Smokers expect to be asked about their smoking** and this need not take up a lot of time or have a negative impact on your relationship with the patient.
  - **ASK** (ask and record smoking status)
  - **ADVISE** (the best way to stop smoking is with a combination of medication and support)
  - **ACT** (refer for specialist support)
- **Free training** is available on very brief advice (<http://www.ncsct.co.uk>). New online training on e-cigarettes for healthcare practitioners will be available imminently.
- Delivering the preventing ill-health by risky behaviours CQUIN contributes to **reducing smokers in the healthcare system**. Specific training to support the delivery of VBA/IBA will be available at the end of March.
- The NHS RightCare Patient Decision Aid ([www.england.nhs.uk/rightcare/shared-decision-making/](http://www.england.nhs.uk/rightcare/shared-decision-making/)) provides Information for patients and practitioners on **stop smoking pathways**.
- Whilst models of stop smoking services will vary, there are key principles that should inform the provision of local stop smoking interventions. Details on the **evidence base** associated with both models and components of the service found here: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/stop-smoking-services-models-of-delivery](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/stop-smoking-services-models-of-delivery).
- 'CleaR Improvement' provides a **self-assessment framework** to improve comprehensive tobacco control across local systems (which includes "deep dive" assessments for acute settings). [www.gov.uk/government/publications/clear-local-tobacco-control-assessment](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/clear-local-tobacco-control-assessment)