**BRIEFING NOTE**

**Stop smoking services**

**Community pharmacy advanced Smoking Cessation Service (SCS): Timescales for local implementation**

Following on from the first Briefing Note in March 2022 which informed pharmacies of the local Stop Smoking Service offer to patients in County Durham who are discharged from hospital (to enable pharmacies providing the SCS to signpost to this local service as appropriate):



**: This Briefing Note provides updated details of the national SCS and plans for local implementation across County Durham and Darlington.**

**Key points**

The SCS is viewed as being a key advanced service for pharmacies to provide, and all pharmacies are encouraged to sign up to provide this important service.

County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust (CDDFT) is aiming to begin referrals to community pharmacies in the autumn 2022.

Therefore, pharmacies wishing to provide the SCS should consider preparing for this service over the summer 2022.

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**Update on the advanced SCS[[1]](#footnote-1)**

* When a referral is received, a member of the pharmacy team should contact the patient within 5 working days.
* Pharmacists should follow read and follow the consultation structure in the National Centre for Smoking Cessation and Training (NCSCT) Standard Treatment Programme[[2]](#footnote-2)which includes:
1. Undertaking a CO test.
2. Provision of behavioural support.
3. Supply of NRT: The pharmacy will supply a maximum of 2 weeks NRT at a time. The supply of NRT should be entered onto the PMR and the NRT supplied should be labelled. The supply should be made free of charge to the patient; NHS prescription charges do not apply to these supplies.[[3]](#footnote-3) The course length should not exceed 12 weeks treatment from the defined quit date. This includes any treatment supplied to the patient while in hospital and at the point of discharge (patients will be discharged from the NHS Trust with up to 2-weeks supply of NRT).

Required NCSCT pharmacist training includes:[[4]](#footnote-4)

* Stop Smoking Practitioner training and certification.
* Mental health and smoking cessation course.
* Pregnancy and smoking cessation course.
* E-cigarettes: a guide for healthcare professional course.

**The local perspective**

Smoking remains the leading cause of preventable illness and premature death in England.

In County Durham, smoking prevalence and smoking-related death rates remain above the national averages. Therefore, the view that will be expressed in the updated County Durham Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment 2022-25[[5]](#footnote-5) is that as many pharmacies as possible should provide this important service.

Similarly in Darlington, smoking continues to be the most significant contributor to preventable disease and early deaths. The effects of smoking continue to impact on average life expectancy in Darlington.

In Spring 2022, ICS tobacco leads will be in post in NHS Trusts across the region to offer stop smoking support to all patients, therefore a larger number of inpatients than ever before will be encouraged to begin their quit attempt whilst in hospital and to continue their quit attempt on hospital discharge either through an established offer from the local Stop Smoking Services or through referral to SCS. Support from Smoke free County Durham[[6]](#footnote-6) is described in the previous see embedded Briefing 1 above. In Darlington, the specialist Stop Smoking Service can be accessed by those who meet specific criteria in order to target those in the community who are most at risk from smoking.

CDDFT therefore aims to begin referrals to pharmacies for the SCS from autumn 2022,[[7]](#footnote-7) therefore pharmacies are advised to begin preparing for this service over the summer 2022.

NHS Trusts will identify patients who are smokers, provide a pre‑quit assessment, and start treatment. With consent, patients will be offered a referral to a pharmacy which is participating in the SCS (the patient will choose which pharmacy they wish to be referred to). The referral from CDDFT will be made using a secure electronic system (e.g. PharmOutcomes) or NHSmail following discharge from hospital. Work is beginning now on the referral pathway to community pharmacy and the IT route that will be used to send referrals to pharmacies.

A local working group with membership from CDDFT, CPCD, the Local Authorities and Stop Smoking Services are working to establish the referral pathway on hospital discharge (e.g. Trust access to up to date information on which pharmacies are providing the service; IT referral pathway; considerations on which service to refer to (e.g. to specialist stop smoking advisers for patients excluded from the SCS - children and adolescents under the age of 18 years; people with complex mental health problems).

1. Information at https://psnc.org.uk/services-commissioning/advanced-services/smoking-cessation-service/ (page updated 11 Apr 22) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. https://www.ncsct.co.uk/pub\_NHS-pharmacy-SCS.php [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. From 1 Apr 22, County Durham pharmacy NRT e-voucher scheme provides free NRT all clients. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. https://elearning.ncsct.co.uk/england [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Due for publication 1 Oct 22 by the County Durham Health and Wellbeing Board at https://www.durhaminsight.info/pna/. CPCD is a member of the PNA Steering Group. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. https://www.smokefreecountydurham.co.uk/ [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Information at https://psnc.org.uk/services-commissioning/advanced-services/smoking-cessation-service/ (updated 11 Apr 22) states that NHSE&I expect most NHS Trusts to be making referrals within 2 years from the commencement date of Mar 22. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)