

# Information for patients and carers

## An information leaflet for smokers

A helping hand to stop smoking

A decorative graphic at the bottom of the page consisting of three overlapping, wavy bands of blue. The top band is a light blue, the middle is a medium blue, and the bottom is a dark blue.

# What do you need to know when admitted to hospital or visiting?

Lancashire Teaching Hospital is a smoke free site, this means that smoking is not allowed on any part of the hospital premises or grounds at Royal Preston Hospital and Chorley and South Ribble District Hospital. This can be anxiety provoking for patients and visitors who smoke. This is because cigarettes contain nicotine, a very addictive drug. There is help available, even if you think you can't or don't want to quit for good.

## Nicotine – The facts

- **A smoker is addicted to a harmless drug (nicotine) but to satisfy this powerful addiction they are exposed to poisonous and fatal chemicals in cigarette smoke.**
- Nicotine causes the release of relaxing, feel good hormones in the brain
- As the nicotine disappears after the cigarette is finished, the positive feelings also disappear
- Without nicotine a smoker suffers negative feelings like agitation, anger & anxiety and this causes an intense craving for nicotine
- The cravings and addiction to nicotine becomes very powerful over years of smoking.
- **Addiction to nicotine is a disease which has very effective treatments.**

## Why is smoking harmful?

Nicotine itself is a relatively harmless substance, apart from leading to a powerful addiction. Nicotine does NOT cause death, cancer, heart disease or any other serious diseases. In fact, it is a very similar drug to caffeine. The dangerous part of smoking is the chemicals produced when tobacco is burnt. Lighting tobacco produces around 5000 poisonous chemicals including tar, carbon monoxide, and arsenic. It is these chemicals that cause death, heart attacks, strokes and cancer.

## What are the benefits of stopping smoking?

- **Enjoy a longer and healthier life**, half of smokers die because of their smoking
- **Reduce your risk of having cancer**, smoking causes 16 different types of cancer
- **Reduce your risk of heart attack or a stroke**, improved blood circulation, less risk of leg ulcers, blocked blood vessels and amputation
- **Improved mental health**, stopping smoking reduces anxiety and depression
- **Reduce your risk of suffering infection**, helps your body heal better after surgery
- **You will have more money**, smoking 20 cigarettes a day costs nearly £3,000 a year
- **You will smell and taste things better**, as well as smell fresher!

## What options are there to support me when in hospital?

Smokers are four times more likely to stop smoking for good with the help of medications and specialist support. Both are readily available at this hospital.

All patients will be asked if they smoke upon admission to the hospital and be offered treatment and support from our specialist team. As we are a smoke free site the treatment will alleviate your withdrawal symptoms while you are an inpatient.

You will also be offered continuing support and treatment with our community team. Our Tobacco Advisors work in partnership with the community Smokefree Lancashire team to provide you with a total of 12 weeks of treatment and support should you wish to continue. Most patients who continue with treatment often see multiple benefits to their health including faster recovery.

If at any point you wish to access the service or receive treatment please ask a member of ward staff.

**Please ask to see a Tobacco Advisor from the Tobacco & Alcohol Care Team (TACT)**

## Nicotine Replacement therapy

Nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) is a safe way for a smoker to have nicotine without cigarettes. It relieves cravings for nicotine. It can be given in lots of different ways like:

- Nicotine patches on the skin plus
- Nicotine lozenges
- Inhalators

It must be remembered that cigarettes are very good at delivering a large 'hit' of nicotine into the body very quickly and nicotine replacement therapy cannot deliver the same 'hit' quite as well as cigarettes can. It is therefore very important to use nicotine replacement in high doses and very regularly to ensure the user gets enough nicotine to satisfy the cravings.

**You cannot overdose on Nicotine, and it is very important that you are on the right treatment to minimise withdrawal and cravings.**

**If you have been prescribed NRT whilst you are in hospital and feel you are not getting a high enough dose you can ask to see one of our tobacco advisors who will review this with you.**

## E-Cigarettes

'E-cigarettes' contain nicotine liquid. This liquid is heated to make a vapour and is referred to as vaping. There is no tobacco in e-cigarettes and so there are significantly less of the harmful chemicals compared to cigarettes. E-cigarettes can help smokers get their nicotine in a less harmful way. E-cigarettes are not currently available for prescription or use in hospital but can be purchased from licensed sellers on discharge from hospital.

# My treatment plan

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# My follow up plan after I go home

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## Where can I turn if I need help?

If it hasn't been offered, request a referral to the Tobacco and Alcohol Care Team, who will come and see you on the ward.

Contact Smokefree Lancashire  
[www.smokefreelancashire.org.uk](http://www.smokefreelancashire.org.uk)



**Telephone: 08081962638**



Download the free NHS App  
Use the NHS Quit Smoking app to help you quit smoking and start breathing easier.

## Sources of further information

[www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk](http://www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk)  
[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)  
[www.patient.co.uk](http://www.patient.co.uk)  
[www.accessable.co.uk](http://www.accessable.co.uk)  
[www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/](http://www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/)

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All our patient information leaflets are available on our website for patients to access and download:

[www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets](http://www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets)

Lancashire Teaching Hospitals is a smoke-free site. Smoking is not permitted anywhere on any of our premises, either inside or outside the buildings. Our staff will ask you about your smoking status when you come to hospital and will offer you support and advice about stopping smoking this will include Nicotine Replacement Therapy to help manage your symptoms of withdrawal and the opportunity to speak to a nurse or advisor from the specialist Tobacco and Alcohol Care Team.

If you want to stop smoking, you can also contact Smokefree Lancashire on Freephone **08081962638**

**Please ask a member of staff if you would like help in understanding this information.**  
**This information can be made available in large print, audio, Braille and in other languages.**

**Department:** Tobacco and Alcohol Care Team

**Division:** Surgery

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