

# Information on Tobacco Control in Northern Ireland

## Background to Tobacco Control in Northern Ireland

The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) launched the [Ten-Year Tobacco Control Strategy for Northern Ireland](#) in February 2012. This is a multi-organisational strategy with the overall aim of creating a tobacco-free society for the population of Northern Ireland. The strategy has three main objectives:

- fewer people starting to smoke;
- more smokers quitting; and
- protecting people from tobacco smoke.

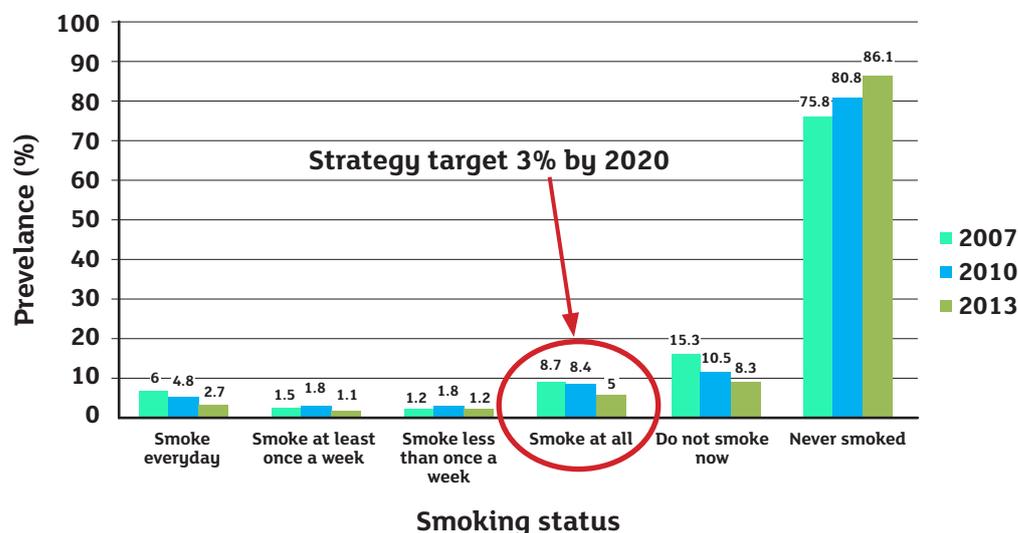
The strategy targets the whole population. It identifies three priority groups:

- children and young people;
- disadvantaged people who smoke; and
- pregnant women and their partners who smoke.

The strategy aims to reduce the prevalence of smoking among children and young people aged 11 to 16 from 8 percent to 3 percent by 2020.

The Public Health Agency (PHA) is responsible for implementing the new strategy and has developed a comprehensive action plan to achieve this. It has set up the Tobacco Strategy Implementation Steering Group (TSISG) to oversee, co-ordinate and report on implementing the new tobacco strategy.

## Smoking habits of 11-16 year olds, 2007-2013



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## Further information

### The Public Health Agency (PHA) electronic cigarettes position statement

The PHA's position statement on electronic cigarettes is available [here](#).

### PHA Stop Smoking website

The PHA has a website with specific information on stopping smoking – visit [www.want2stop.info](http://www.want2stop.info) for more information.

## Contact points

Each local Public Health Agency office has a health and social well-being team that can offer advice on smoking and provide information on programmes\* to help give up smoking available in your area.

### PHA South Eastern Area

Lisburn Health Centre  
Lisburn  
BT28 1LU  
Tel: 028 9151 0199

### PHA Belfast Area

18 Ormeau Avenue  
Belfast  
BT2 8HS  
Tel: 028 9031 1611

### PHA Western Area

Gransha Park House  
15 Gransha Park  
Clooney Road  
L'Derry  
BT47 6FN  
Tel: 028 7186 0086

### PHA Northern Area

County Hall  
182 Galgorm Road  
Ballymena  
BT42 1QB  
Tel: 028 2531 1192

### PHA Southern Area

Tower Hill  
Armagh  
BT61 9DR  
Tel: 028 3741 4557

\* Programmes vary.

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Support can include:

- an assembly presentation that raises awareness of the dangers and impact of tobacco use, helping to prevent young people starting to smoke and supporting those who have started smoking to stop; and
- an intensive 8–12 week programme of support aimed at helping smokers to stop smoking for good. This intensive support could be either on a one-to-one basis or in a small group of up to five pupils. This programme supports pupils on a weekly basis. It can give smokers licensed nicotine replacement therapy products (NRT), for example patches, gum or inhalators, free of charge to help maximise their chances of success.

Smoking prevention programmes are available, to find out more contact your local PHA office.

## Cancer Focus Support for Smoking Cessation in Post-Primary Schools

Cancer Focus Northern Ireland offers advice and guidance on tobacco control to all post-primary schools. It currently receives funding to run stop smoking services in the Belfast and South Eastern Public Health Agency areas.

The support it provides includes an assembly presentation to raise awareness of the dangers and impact of tobacco use to help prevent young people from starting to smoke and to support those who have started to stop. If any pupils want to stop smoking, Cancer Focus can offer an intensive 8–12 week programme of support aimed at helping them to stop smoking for good.

This intensive support can be either on a one-to-one basis or in a small group of up to five pupils. This programme supports pupils weekly and provides licensed nicotine replacement therapy products (NRT), for example patches, gum or inhalators free of charge, to help maximise their chances of success. Parental consent is not required for administering NRT, as this is an over the counter medication approved for use in persons aged 12 and over. Consent is covered by the Gillick principle (a young person can be competent to make their own decision). However, Cancer Focus provides a consent letter informing parents or guardians about the programme and using NRT. Cancer Focus does not currently recommend electronic cigarettes because they are unregulated (March 2014).

To ensure the smooth running of the 12-week programme, pupils attend support sessions at different times so that they do not miss the same lesson each week. Cancer Focus uses carbon monoxide readings to validate a pupil's non-smoking status. It will ask pupils who continue to smoke to leave the programme. Pupils should not use NRT openly in the school setting. When they do need to use their nicotine gum or inhalator to alleviate strong cravings, they should do so discreetly.

# Information on Tobacco Control in Northern Ireland

Cancer Focus offers an information session for teaching staff so that they are familiar with the process before the programme is implemented.

For further information, please contact Cancer Focus Northern Ireland on 028 9066 3281;  
[behealthy@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:behealthy@cancerfocusni.org)