What Harrow’s Tobacco Control and Stop Smoking Services do

Tobacco control and Stop Smoking Services in Harrow provide: programmes to help smokers quit; training for health professionals; awareness campaigns; support for businesses to develop smoking policies; smoking prevention work among young people; development of a shisha strategy and work to crack down on illegal tobacco sales in the borough.

Since the council took on responsibility for public health in April 2013, the service has worked with over 3,800 smokers and over 1,850 have successfully quit.

The 5- to 6-week one-to-one Stop Smoking programmes are delivered through 57 pharmacies and 6 GP surgeries in the borough. The Specialist Stop Smoking Service helps smokers with health issues or those who have had difficulty quitting with other services. It offers programmes for:

- Smokers with mental health issues, including in-patients
- Pregnant women
- Disabled and housebound smokers

It also follows up smokers who have not successfully quit to support them to try again.

Training delivered by the Stop Smoking team includes:

- Training for health and social care workers, and pharmacy staff on basic advice and information sharing
- Basic advice and information sharing training for the voluntary sector, adapted to cover specific cultural issues
- Training for health and social care workers, including junior doctors and midwives, to give advice to smokers on the dangers of smoking and methods for quitting
- Training Stop Smoking advisors and keeping them updated on new treatments and methods
- Smoking cessation for midwives as part of their mandatory training
- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome awareness training for early years service workers
- Training new Stop Smoking advisors and ongoing training for advisors with low success rates
- Updating advisors on latest treatments

Every year the team runs campaigns around the New Year, National No Smoking Day in March and “Stoptober”, to raise awareness of the dangers of smoking and the support available for those who want to quit.

The team also runs a programme called Cut Films to prevent young people from taking up smoking, and has given one-to-one support to secondary pupils who wanted help to quit smoking.

The team are working with pan-London illegal tobacco and shisha groups. Locally, they work with Trading Standards and HMRC to crack down on illegal tobacco in Harrow and additionally with licensing and environmental health to tackle shisha smoking in the borough.