

# HSE Tobacco Free Ireland Programme

Martina Blake - National Lead Health Service Executive  
Tobacco Free Ireland Programme



QUIT.ie

# Underpinning Policy & Strategy

- WHO International Treaty – FCTC
- Cross Government Strategy – Tobacco Free Ireland 2013- 2025
- Cross Government Strategy – Healthy Ireland
- 4 year TFI Programme Plan/HSE HI Implementation Plan
- HR HSE Tobacco Free Campus Policy
- Dept of Health National Stop Smoking Clinical Guidelines for Health Professionals



# Ireland - Where are we today?

Prevalence of smoking by year (%)

2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2021	2022	2023	2024
23	23	22	20	17	18	18	18	17

Usage of e-cigarettes – by smoking behaviour (%)

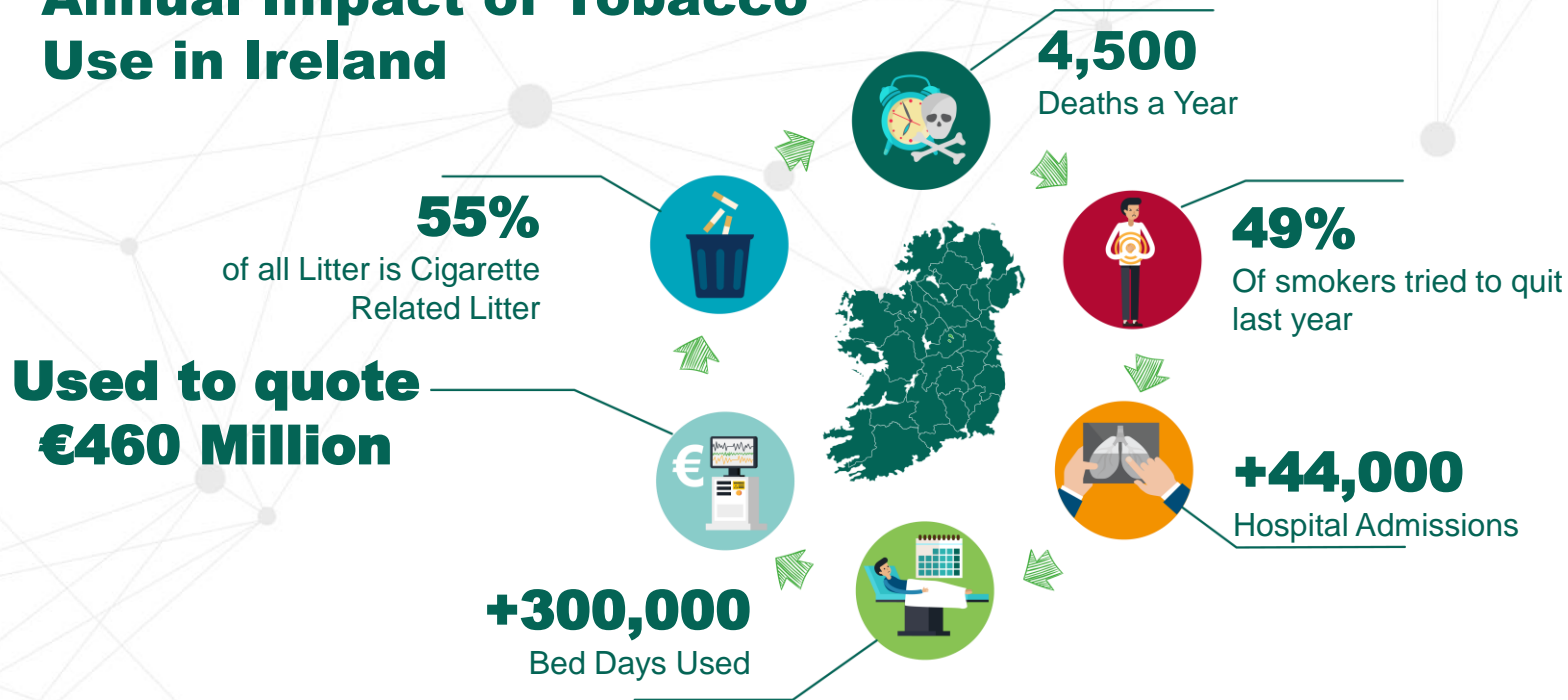
	E-cigarette users
Daily tobacco smokers	20
Occasional tobacco smokers	15
Ex-smokers of tobacco	47
Never smoked tobacco	18

E-cigarette usage is highest among younger people, with 17% of 15-24 year olds reporting that they use them either daily or occasionally.

E-cigarette use is higher amongst men in this age group, with 20% of men aged 15 to 24 and 15% of women of the same age using e-cigarettes.



# Annual Impact of Tobacco Use in Ireland



# The Overall Aim of Tobacco Free Ireland is to reach less than 5% smoking prevalence by 2025



## **DENORMALISE**

Smoking for the next generation



## **ACKNOWLEDGE**

tobacco use as a disease and treat



## **PROVIDE CESSATION SUPPORT**

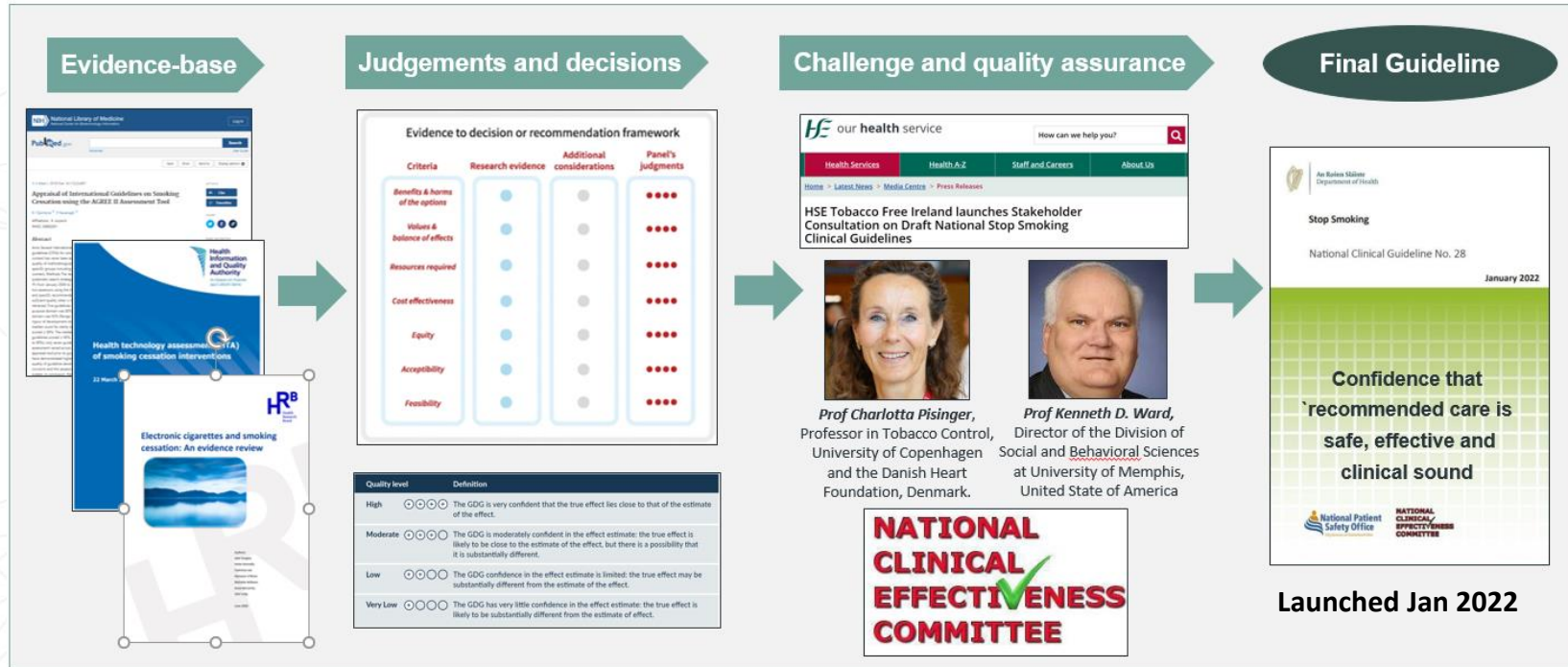
- Encourage smokers to access services through QUIT
- Implement Stop Smoking Guidelines



**PROVIDE**  
a Tobacco Free environment



# Clinical Guideline Development



## Electronic cigarette use and tobacco cigarette smoking initiation in adolescents: An evidence review



Authors:  
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Anne McCarthy  
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Date May 2020



**3 to 5 times more likely to start smoking**

# What do the guidelines say?

Ask, Advise and Arrange – safe, effective and sound clinical care



Ask



Advise



Arrange

Evidence-base



Judgements and decisions



Quality of Evidence  
HIGH  
Strength of  
Recommendation  
HIGH

**Double chances  
of successful quit**





Ask



Advise



Arrange

**Behavioural support**

- Individual or Group Counselling
- Telephone support
- Text messaging support
- Internet-based support

+

**Stop medicine support**

- Varenicline (+/- NRT)
- If varenicline not suitable, combination NRT
- NRT monotherapy, or bupropion (+ / - NRT) or nortriptyline can also be used, but not as first-line.

Evidence-base



Judgements and decisions



Quality of Evidence  
HIGH  
Strength of  
Recommendation  
HIGH

# How does the Stop Smoking Service Work?



## Referral to the Service

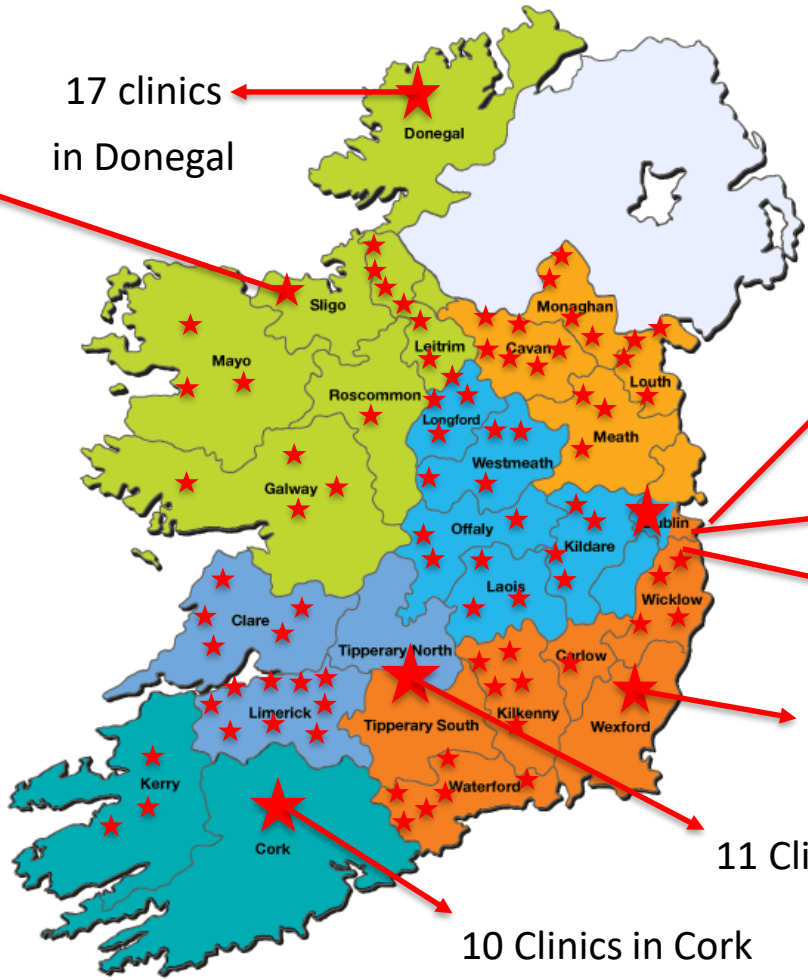
- There are number of different ways that a person can be referred or self refer in to the intensive stop smoking services
  - The public can self refer from the quit.ie website
  - The public can self refer by phoning the national quitline (Freephone 1800 201 203)
  - They can be referred by their GP electronically (patient data automatically populates in to our national patient IT system and is processed centrally by our quitline staff)
  - Local referral pathways (local service phone line, email, QR code then entered in to the IT system)
  - Health professional referral (paper, email and electronic)



Do you want to stop smoking?  
We Can Quit is a free stop smoking programme, offering group support, one to one support and stop smoking medication.



**WE CAN QUIT - BUNCRANA**  
START DATE: Thursday 14th March 2024  
TIME: 7.00pm - 9.00pm  
VENUE: TBC (Buncrana Area)  
FO BOOK: @Clash@Inishowen.ie/Call (074) 934228 or scan the QR Code



17 clinics  
in Donegal

9 Clinics in  
Sligo

50  
'We Can Quit'  
community stop  
smoking groups  
annually

National Quitline  
**1800 201 203**

55 clinics in Dublin

11 Clinics in Wexford

11 Clinics in Tipperary

10 Clinics in Cork

Map of stop smoking  
services

Population: 5.127  
million

Smoking population:  
750k

# HSE Stop Smoking Services – What do we offer?

An Evidence-based Standard Treatment Programme for Tobacco Cessation

## Delivered by a Trained Stop Smoking Advisor

- Staff trained in competencies (knowledge & skills) required to support those attempting to quit (6-8 hours online followed by 2 days skills to practice face to face training followed by training in use of the IT system and mentoring in the field)

## Offer of One-to-One Behavioural Support

- Clients meet face-to-face with a Stop Smoking Advisor, online or on the phone. They will meet with the client weekly to support them through the quitting process.
- We offer a safe space and a non-judgemental service. We are here to support.
- This support will start 1 to 4 weeks before your quit date and can continue for up to a year.
- There are a minimum of 9 appointments

## We recommend and arrange supply of free Nicotine Replacement Therapy & Stop Smoking Medications

- These products are free to anybody who engages with our stop smoking service.





## Other Supports from HSE QUIT available Nationally

### Group Support – We Can Quit

- Our group support sessions last 7- 10 weeks.
- Groups of approximately 12 people, led by a Stop Smoking Advisor.
- Meet for about an hour and a half each week.

### QUIT Website – QUIT.ie

- Lots of information and support and our online Quit plan.

### Online Quit Plan

- A personalised online quit support programme tailored to you.
- Will send you emails and text messages based on how often you want to receive them.
- These messages are designed to help motivate and encourage you to keep on track.

### Quit text service

- This service will send you motivational text messages to help keep you focused on your quitting journey.

**facebook.com/HSEquit and other social channels for advertising Instagram Reddit etc**



The Quality Assurance Standards encompass the HSE Standard Tobacco Cessation Support Programme, which consists of a minimum of six sessions, including a pre-quit assessment and weekly sessions until four weeks after the Quit Date.

Session 1: Pre-quit Assessment (one or two weeks prior to Quit Date)

Session 2: Quit Date

Session 3: 1 week post Quit Date

Session 4: 2 weeks post Quit Date

Session 5: 3 weeks post Quit Date

Session 6: 4 weeks post Quit Date (four week follow-up appointment)

There are also 12-week, 26-week & 52-week post quit-date follow ups.

Standard Treatment Programme (breakdown)	Minutes
Pre-quit Contacts (45 mins X 2)	90
Quit Date contact	30
Week 1 follow-up	30
Week 2 follow-up	15
Week 3 follow-up	15
Week 4 follow-up	15
Week 12 follow-up	10
Week 26 follow-up	10
Week 52 follow-up	10
QuitManager (data entry time)	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>265</b>

## Behavioural support

As a stop smoking advisor, what do some people think that we tell smokers?

Smoking is bad for you. You should quit.



# The Importance of Behavioural Support

- Medications roughly double smokers' chances of quitting
- So does behavioural support!
- In the group work we focus on reflective listening, motivational interviewing and provision of non-judgemental support for clients
- **DECISIONAL BALANCE EXERCISE**



# How is this Possible?

- Significant investment from Government for Slaintecare (Equal healthcare for all), free NRT & HR investment. (73 WTEs)
- Clinical Guidelines to support treating tobacco addiction as a disease
- National Patient management system
- Electronic referrals
- Services in the community and acute settings as well as a national QUITline
- Support provided by (Health promotion officers, Clinical nurse and midwifery specialists and peer support workers)
- Providing support FREE at all who access the service





# ASK

ASK every patient about tobacco use & record smoking status at every visit

# ADVISE

ADVISE on the risks of smoking, the benefits of quitting & the most effective way of quitting

# ACT

1. Prescribe

2. Refer: HSE Quit Service

Combined pharmacotherapy & behavioural support is 4 times more effective when compared with quitting unaided

Varenicline (Champix)		Combination Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT)		
Can be used alone <b>OR</b> with NRT#		LONG ACTING NRT (PATCH)		SHORT ACTING NRT
Week 1 : Continue smoking		Nicotine Patch*		
DAY	DOSE	WEEKS	24 hr	16 hr
Day 1 – 3	0.5mg x 1 daily	1 – 4	*21mg or 14mg	25mg
Day 4 – 7	0.5mg x 2 daily	5 – 8	*14mg or 7mg	25mg
Week 2 – 12: Stop smoking		9 – 10	7mg	15mg
Day 8 – 84+	1mg x 2 daily	11 – 12	7mg	10mg
*If unsuitable, combination NRT should be recommended. See SPC & PIL.		* Higher dose more suitable for people who smoke more heavily, refer to SPC and PIL for more information		

- Gum
- Lozenges
- Inhaler
- Mouth Spray

For pregnant women consider 16hr Patch +/- Short Acting NRT



1. Prescribe

2. Refer

HealthLink	As a Referrer on QuitManager	Direct referral
Select <b>HSE Quit Smoking Services</b> in the dropdown	Become a referrer on QuitManager (the national patient management system for stop smoking service). Please email <a href="mailto:quitmanager.tf@hse.ie">quitmanager.tf@hse.ie</a>	Email client name, DOB and phone number to: <a href="mailto:quit@healthmail.ie">quit@healthmail.ie</a> or to your local service listed on <a href="https://www2.hse.ie/living-well/quit-smoking/support-services/">https://www2.hse.ie/living-well/quit-smoking/support-services/</a>

Medication & Intensive behavioural supports are available FREE for all attending HSE Stop Smoking Services (regardless of medical card status)

National Stop Smoking Clinical Guidelines

Further info on medications



# Making a referral to the stop smoking service

Send a referral via your healthmail email into [quit@healthmail.ie](mailto:quit@healthmail.ie) unless you have local arrangements with local stop smoking services



# Stop Smoking Medicines and How to Use Them

E-learning Course

CLICK TO START



< PREV

NEXT >

# Welcome and Introduction

## Course Overview



### Objective

This course will build your knowledge, skill and confidence to recommend, advise on, and prescribe stop-smoking medicines to your patients/clients.



### Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, you will be able to:

- Summarise the key recommendations of the Stop Smoking Clinical Guideline
- Identify how you can help someone successfully stop smoking
- Implement the steps involved in Brief Advice
- Know how to make referrals to HSE Stop Smoking Services
- Discuss stop smoking medicines confidently and appropriately with your patients/clients



### Audience

All healthcare professionals



### Duration

45 minutes



### Test Your Knowledge

Informal knowledge checks throughout.



### Life-Saver Points

You'll earn life-saver points for correctly answering questions.

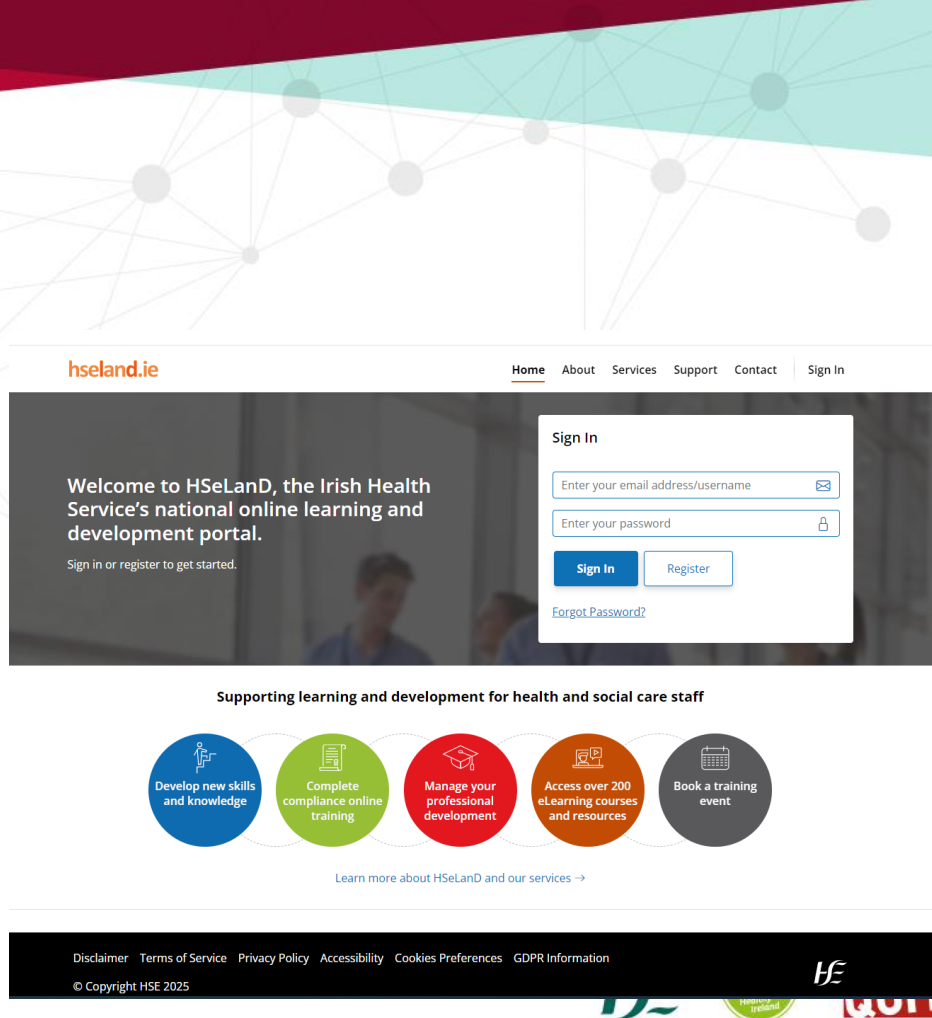






[www.hseland.ie](http://www.hseland.ie)

Search for 'Stop Smoking'





# Free Stop Smoking Medications

Will be  
unavailable  
to order  
soon

Steady release  
over time



Patch



Spray

or



Gum

or



Lozenges

or



Inhalator

Faster acting NRT Products



# Introduction and Administration of Free NRT

- Funding bid for free NRT in 2021 successful initial budget of 726K in 2022,
- Increased by 1.1 m to 1.826 million in 2024
- Increased by 0.5m to 2.326 million in 2025
- No scheme through PCRS/DPS to provide free NRT at point of contact for client
- Local arrangements in each CHO region
- National procurement of an online pharmacy underway (interim measure short term)
- Further engagement with PCRS and pharmacy task force to agree a process where all pharmacies can participate



# Varenicline

Oral use. Adults: The recommended dose is 1mg Varenicline twice daily following a 1-week titration (see SPC for full details).

**Adjustment of the dose of other medicines may be necessary.**

Examples include **theophylline** (a medicine to treat breathing problems), **warfarin** (a medicine to reduce blood clotting), and **insulin** (a medicine to treat diabetes). If you have severe kidney disease, you should avoid taking **cimetidine** (a medicine used for gastric problems) at the same time as Varenicline as this may cause increased blood levels of Varenicline . Observe for changes in mood depression etc particularly with clients with Hx of same.



# Challenges with scaling varenicline use

- Varenicline not available yet on GMS or DPS
- Challenge for stop smoking service to introduce currently due to the lack of an agreed price and the prescription fee process is also a barrier to access
- Currently only private patients can access this 1<sup>st</sup> line med



# Cytisine

Cytisine works by attaching to the same receptors in the brain that nicotine does. It 'tricks' your brain into thinking you've had a cigarette. This reduces urges and the withdrawal symptoms of stopping smoking.

Hpra website – [www.hpra.ie](http://www.hpra.ie) for access to the SPC



# Dosing Schedule for Cystisine

- Dosing for cystisine is on a sliding scale over 25 days
- See full SPC for dosing schedule

<b>Days of treatment</b>	<b>Recommended dosing</b>	<b>Maximum daily dose</b>
From the 1st to the 3rd day	1 tablet every 2 hours	6 tablets
From the 4th to the 12th day	1 tablet every 2.5 hours	5 tablets
From the 13th to the 16th day	1 tablet every 3 hours	4 tablets
From the 17th to the 20th day	1 tablet every 5 hours	3 tablets
From the 21st to the 25th day	1-2 tablets a day	to 2 tablets



# Cytisine

- Approved under GMS and DPS for public reimbursement
- Challenge for stop smoking service to introduce currently due to CG recommendation gap and prescription fee process
- Cytisine should be taken with caution in case of ischemic heart disease, heart failure, hypertension, pheochromocytoma, atherosclerosis and other peripheral vascular diseases, gastric and duodenal ulcer, gastroesophageal reflux disease, hyperthyroidism, diabetes and schizophrenia.
- Cytisine should not be used with anti-tuberculosis drugs. No other clinical data on significant interaction with other drugs.



# Looking to the Future



**We Can Quit** is a free, friendly and supportive 12 week programme for women, who smoke and who want support to quit smoking.

Register for courses in Dublin 3, 5, 13, 17



Research Brief

Financial incentives for stopping smoking: how and why do they work?

Piloting a model for Delivery in Ireland



**HE**

# Giving up smoking is possible




**QUIT.ie**

Gum and other Nicotine Replacement Therapies can help.

Find out how to get them for free at Quit.ie  
Enter your details here

**HE hi YOU CAN QUIT**

## Give your baby a breather – Quit smoking

Help and advice on quitting smoking during pregnancy



Freephone 1800 201 203  
Freetext Text QUIT to 50100  
www.quit.ie

**HE hi YOU CAN QUIT**

## Growing up smoke-free...

How you can help your child to grow up smoke-free




**My mammy stopped smoking, she did it for me.**

Inside you, your child is doing his or her best to grow healthy and strong. If you smoke, you may be restricting his or her development.

Through our free QUIT programme, we're helping mothers-to-be to give up smoking at this important stage in life. And we can help you quit too.

CALL 1800 201 203  
EMAIL: support@quit.ie  
FREETEXT QUIT to 50100  
www.quit.ie

**HE**  
Inhalers and other Nicotine Replacement Therapies can help.

**YOU CAN QUIT**

# Stop smoking for 28 days and you're 5 times more likely to stop for good.

Get tips, tools and support at **QUIT.ie** or freephone 1800 201 203

**HE**

# I'm not able to quit smoking



**QUIT.ie**

Mouth sprays and other Nicotine Replacement Therapies can help.

Find out how to get them for free at Quit.ie  
Enter your details here

**HE**

# I'm not ready to quit smoking



**QUIT.ie**

Inhalers and other Nicotine Replacement Therapies can help.

Find out how to get them for free at Quit.ie  
Enter your details here

# QUIT.ie

A guide to help you quit smoking

**Stop smoking and take back control in 28 days**

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1 X	2 X	3 X	4 X	5 X
6 X	7 X	8 X	9 X	10 X	11 X	12 X
13 X	14 X	15 X	16 X	17 X	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Get the tips, tools and support to help you stop smoking at  
 Freephone **1800 201 203** **QUIT.ie**

Our support will double your chances of quitting smoking for good  
 Freephone 1800 201 203

# QUIT letting fear Win

hi **QUIT.ie** HE South's Stroke & Heart Hub Building a Better Health Service

## QUIT Deal with those cravings! Follow the 5 Ds

### DRINK WATER

Drinking water or fruit juice helps the cravings to pass

### DELAY

Wait at least 3-5 minutes and the urge will pass

### DISTRACT YOURSELF

Move away from the situation

### DEEP BREATHS

Breathe slowly and deeply

### DON'T DWELL ON IT

Don't overthink things!



## STOP SMOKING MEDICATIONS AT A GLANCE



### Recommendation 3 from National Stop Smoking Clinical Guidelines (National Clinical Effectiveness Committee Guideline No. 28)

**3.1:** For people, who are currently interested in quitting, all healthcare professionals should recommend that behavioural support, either alone or in combination with pharmacological supports, increases the chances of successful quitting.

**3.2:** For people currently interested in quitting all healthcare professionals should recommend Varenicline (alone or in combination with nicotine replacement therapy (NRT)) as first-line treatment in the absence of a contra-indication for those wishing to use pharmacological support.

**3.2.1:** If Varenicline is not suitable, combination NRT treatment should be recommended.  
**3.2.2:** NRT monotherapy, or bupropion (alone or in combination with NRT) or nortriptyline can also be recommended, but not as first-line.

### ALL STOP SMOKING MEDICINES WORK BEST WHEN COMBINED WITH BEHAVIOURAL SUPPORT FROM A TRAINED STOP SMOKING ADVISOR

Medication	Dose	Duration of Course	Additional Information and precautions
<b>Varenicline (Champix)</b> PRESCRIPTION ONLY  Long Acting	<b>Week 1: Continue smoking</b>		Patients who cannot tolerate adverse reactions of Varenicline may have the dose lowered temporarily or permanently to 0.5mg twice daily.  For patients with severe renal impairment (estimated creatinine clearance < 30 ml/min) or those with moderate renal impairment who experience intolerable adverse effects, the recommended max. dose is 1mg once daily.  Avoid in pregnancy. Shared decision-making with patient if breast feeding taking risk/benefit into account.  See SPC and PIL for further information including precautions, interactions and adverse events.
	<b>DAY</b>	<b>DOSE</b>	
	Day 1 – 3	0.5mg x 1 daily	
	Day 4 – 7	0.5mg x 2 daily	
	<b>Week 2: Stop Smoking</b>		
Day 8 – 84+	1mg x 2 daily	Can prescribe an additional 12 weeks if required.	
Refer to SPC and PIL for more information.			

### THE SINGLE BIGGEST MISTAKE WITH NRT IS UNDER-DOSING. UNDER-TREATED CRAVINGS INCREASE THE RISK OF SMOKING RELAPSE.

Nicotine Replacement Patch	24 HOUR PATCH	*Heavy dependence	*Light dependence	10 – 12 weeks	Initial patch strength determined by the amount smoked per day, lighter smokers can start on step 2 (14mg/24 hr patch or 15mg/16 hr patch). See SPC for further details.  24 hour patch helpful if early morning cravings.  16 hour patch helpful for patients with sleep disturbances.  All healthcare professionals should advise pregnant women who currently smoke about the harms of smoking and the benefits of quitting. NRT can be recommended in shared decision-making following discussion of benefits and risks.
	Long Acting				
Long Acting	Weeks 1 – 4	21mg	14mg	See SPC and PIL for further information including precautions, interactions and adverse events.	
	Weeks 5 – 8	14mg	7mg		
	Weeks 9 – 10	7mg	7mg		
	Weeks 11 – 12	7mg	7mg		
	<b>16 HOUR PATCH</b>	*Heavy dependence	*Light dependence		
	Weeks 1 – 4	25mg	15mg		
	Weeks 5 – 8	25mg	15mg		
	Weeks 9 – 10	15mg	15mg		
	Weeks 11 – 12	10mg	10mg		

\*Heavy = 20+ cigs a day/20 Paks  
\*Light = < 20 cigs a day

THUR-12

## ASK ADVISE ACT

### 1. Prescribe

ASK every patient about tobacco use & record smoking status at every visit.

### 2. Refer

ADVISE on the risks of smoking, the benefits of quitting & the most effective way of quitting.

### 1. Prescribe

2. Refer: HSE Quit Service

Combined pharmacotherapy & behavioural support is 4 times more effective when compared with quitting unaided

Varenicline (Champix)	LOW ACTING NRT (PATCH)	SHORT ACTING NRT	For pregnant women consider Varenicline or Short Acting NRT																					
Can be used alone OR with NRT*  Week 1 - Continue smoking <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><th>DAY</th><th>DOSE</th></tr> <tr><td>Day 1 - 3</td><td>0.5mg x 1 daily</td></tr> <tr><td>Day 4 - 7</td><td>0.5mg x 2 daily</td></tr> </table> Week 2 - 12- Stop smoking Day 8 - 84+ 1mg x 2 daily *If suitable, combination NRT should be recommended. See SPC & PIL.	DAY	DOSE	Day 1 - 3	0.5mg x 1 daily	Day 4 - 7	0.5mg x 2 daily	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><th>WEEKS</th><th>24hr</th><th>16hr</th></tr> <tr><td>1 - 4</td><td>*21mg or 14mg</td><td>21mg</td></tr> <tr><td>5 - 8</td><td>*14mg or 7mg</td><td>21mg</td></tr> <tr><td>9 - 10</td><td>7mg</td><td>15mg</td></tr> <tr><td>11 - 12</td><td>7mg</td><td>10mg</td></tr> </table> *Higher dose more suitable for people who smoke more heavily, refer to SPC and PIL for more information.	WEEKS	24hr	16hr	1 - 4	*21mg or 14mg	21mg	5 - 8	*14mg or 7mg	21mg	9 - 10	7mg	15mg	11 - 12	7mg	10mg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gum</li> <li>• Lozenges</li> <li>• Inhaler</li> <li>• Mouth Spray</li> </ul>	
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HeathLink	As a Referrer on QuitManager	Direct referral
Select HSE Quit Smoking Services in the app/online	Become a referrer on QuitManager (the national patient management system for stop smoking services). Please email <a href="mailto:quitmanager@hse.ie">quitmanager@hse.ie</a>	Email (dent name, DOB and phone number to: <a href="mailto:quit@hse.ie">quit@hse.ie</a> or to your local service based on <a href="https://www2.hse.ie/stop-smoking/quit-smoking-support-services/">https://www2.hse.ie/stop-smoking/quit-smoking-support-services/</a> )

Medication & intensive behavioural support is available FREE for all attending HSE Stop Smoking Services (regardless of medical card status).

National Stop Smoking Clinical Guidelines

Further info on medications



# Smoking during cancer treatment

Cancer treatment is tough... Smoking can make it tougher

Quitting smoking during your cancer treatment can:

- improves your treatment effectiveness
- reduce your treatment side effects
- reduce your risk of infection
- improve your wound healing if you have surgery
- reduce risk of cancer returning and spreading
- improve your breathing and energy

Remember it is never too late to quit. Help is available from the HSE Quit Service

we've got your back if you want to QUIT

Our support will double your chances of quitting smoking for good

Freephone 1800 201 203

# Links to Information & Resources

National Clinical Guideline No.28 – Stop Smoking

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/4828b-stop-smoking/>

State of Tobacco Control in Ireland report 2022

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/tobaccocontrol/news/state-of-tobacco-control-report-2022.pdf>

Healthy Ireland Survey 2024

<https://www.gov.ie/ga/foilsuichan/d1ab3-healthy-ireland-survey-2024/>

Stop Smoking Medicines and how to use them e-learning course

[www.hseland.ie](http://www.hseland.ie)

Making Every Contact Count

[www.hseland.ie](http://www.hseland.ie)

Quit.ie website

<https://www2.hse.ie/quit-smoking/>

Ordering health promotion information leaflets

[www.healthpromotion.ie](http://www.healthpromotion.ie) register as a health professional to bulk order





”  
**THANK  
YOU**  
”

[tfi@hse.ie](mailto:tfi@hse.ie)

