

# Strategy: Identify, train and support the workforce



## ✓ Suggested actions

### Identify staff

- Gain consensus to identify who is responsible for:
  - coordinating the *Smoke-free Health Policy* across the LHD
  - identifying smokers and recent quitters at the unit level
  - implementing smoking cessation interventions.

### Support staff to support patients

- Display posters and flow charts to promote brief intervention (the 5As) and NSW Quitline.
- Within clinical decision-making tools (paper or electronic), embed prompts and reminders to:
  - ask patients and clients about (and assess) their smoking status, and document it in health
  - provide advice and assistance, including NRT and a referral to the NSW Quitline or their GP.
- Ensure there are consistent NRT protocols in use across the LHD that prevent under-dosing, and that all health professionals are aware of them.
- Establish a process where pharmacy staff are notified when NRT is prescribed, and attend the unit to discuss with patients and clients the correct use of gum and lozenges (as is done for other medications, such as anticoagulants), and help with discharge planning.
- Document the outcomes of the brief intervention and the recommended follow-up in the patient's discharge letter and treatment plan.
- Ensure that a comprehensive range of NRT is readily available to clinical staff and that any barriers to its reliable supply are addressed.
- Provide in-patients with an initial free supply of NRT (or vouchers) on discharge.
- Provide out-patients with a sample of NRT, if possible.
- Provide each ward and unit with NRT demonstration packs with samples and information on correct use, for staff to show patients and to ensure staff are familiar with the various types of NRT.

### Train staff

- Undertake a needs assessment of the skills and expertise of the staff responsible for implementing smoking cessation interventions.
- Consider including coordination or delivery of smoking cessation activities in either job descriptions or staff performance plans.
- Ensure professional development plans for staff include appropriate training in smoking cessation interventions.
- Enrol staff in the Health Education and Training Institute's (HETI's) e-learning module *Smoking Cessation: A Guide for Staff* available at [heti.nsw.gov.au/Courses/Smoking-Cessation-A-Guide-for-Staff](http://heti.nsw.gov.au/Courses/Smoking-Cessation-A-Guide-for-Staff).
- For health professionals working with parents or young people who smoke, a free e-learning program is available through Kids Health ([kidshealth.schn.health.nsw.gov.au/kidsquit-smoking-cessation-brief-interventions](http://kidshealth.schn.health.nsw.gov.au/kidsquit-smoking-cessation-brief-interventions)). This provides professionals with strategies to support smoking cessation and reducing exposure to secondhand smoke.
- Collate training information and opportunities, and promote them to all staff.
- Engage with potential champions and clinical leads to undergo training and promote available resources.
- Provide training information on the local health district's intranet.
- Ensure training is included in new staff orientation programs.
- Ensure the training available covers information on the *NSW Smoke-Free Health Policy* and its tools and resources; the nature of nicotine addiction; quit smoking medications; how to provide strategic advice and brief intervention; how to complete an effective smoking cessation consultation; NRT protocols; and availability and access to smoking cessation supports in the district.

