

## **All Together Smokefree Cheshire & Merseyside Position Statement – Our shared ambition to help people who smoke to quit**

### **1. Introduction**

**This All Together Smokefree position statement outlines an agreed Cheshire and Merseyside (CM) shared ambition on behalf of the whole system to help people who smoke to quit as part of our comprehensive programme of work to tackle smoking as the subregion’s single greatest cause of preventable ill health and premature death and driver of health inequalities.**

### **2. Background**

Smoking will kill up to 2 in 3 smokers, half in middle age. Updated estimates suggest that smoking costs CM £1.9bn annually impacting our sub-region’s health, wealth, happiness and the wider economy. Nearly all this money goes straight out of the local economy as tobacco industry profits or tax. And this economic burden does not include costs to smokers and their families who lose loved ones through an addiction which costs on average £2,486 a year, in addition to the 109,632 CM smoking households living in poverty.

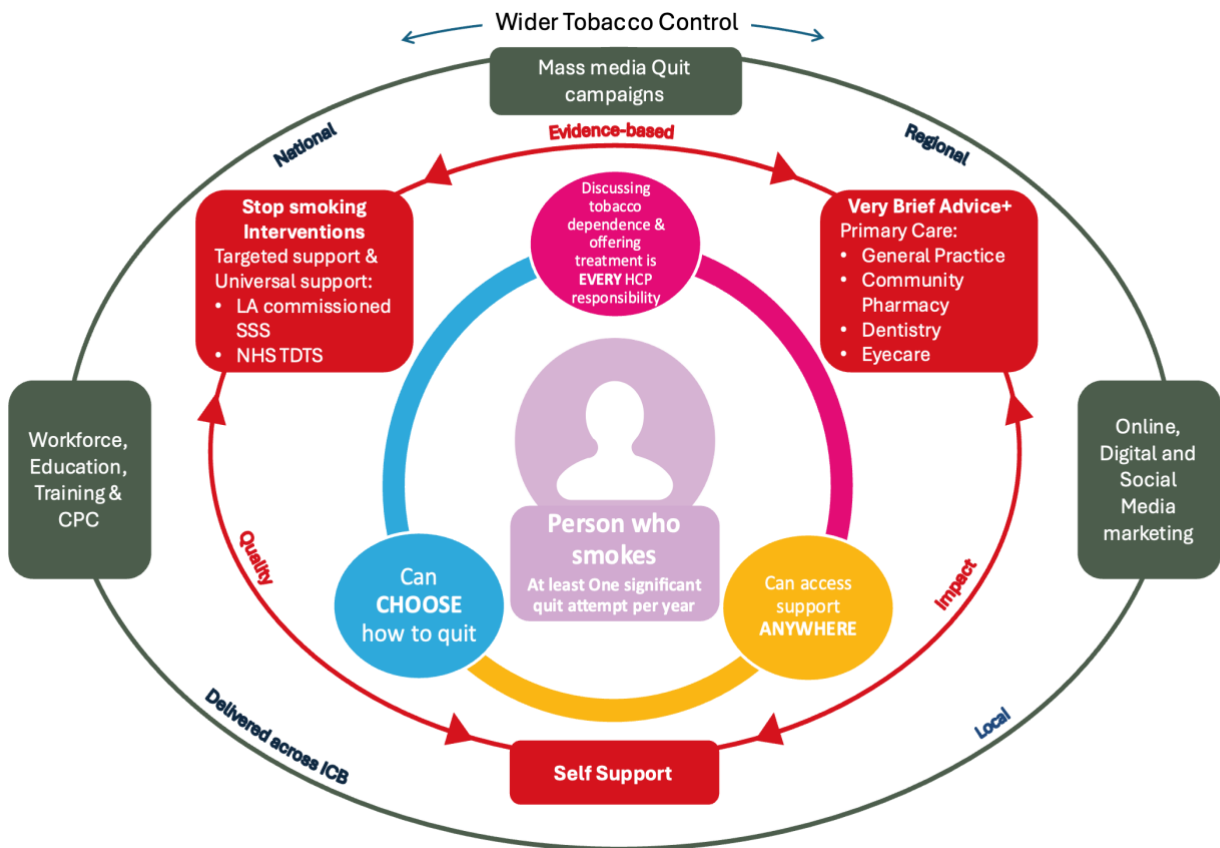
Whilst CM smoking rates have fallen to 11.7% in 2022 and remain slightly below the England average at 12.7%, there is no room for complacency. Smoking tobacco remains the single biggest cause of preventable illness and death in CM with approximately 3435 people dying each year from smoking<sup>i</sup>. Cancer Research UK estimates that one person dies every 5 minutes from smoking related conditions<sup>ii</sup>, and for each person who dies, there are 30 more people in our subregion suffering from a smoking related illness.

Smoking tobacco products remains a significant driver of health inequalities. Our priority for tobacco control must be to reduce the number of people who smoke. The 2030 Smokefree ambition is to achieve 5% smoking prevalence across all populations but based on predictions using data up to 2021, this won't be achieved until 2039, while it is estimated that in the most deprived quintile in England it may take four times longer to achieve 5% than in the least deprived<sup>iii</sup>.

Around 237,000 adults still smoke in CM, equivalent to approximately the adult populations of St Helens and Knowsley combined. In 2021, 36% of smokers in England made at least one attempt to quit, but this is still far too low a rate to achieve 5% smoking prevalence by 2030. Making quitting the norm and increasing the overall number of smokers who make an annual quit attempt through ensuring access to high quality evidenced based support where appropriate will help achieve the smokefree ambition and make smoking history for the people of Cheshire & Merseyside.

**All Together Smokefree Cheshire & Merseyside Position Statement – Our shared ambition to help people who smoke to quit**

**3. All Together Smokefree Cheshire & Merseyside systemwide approach to maximising quitting**



**4. Purpose of the Shared Ambition**

The purpose of shared ambition across CM is to create a system wide approach that normalises quitting and ensures that everyone who smokes has access to appropriate evidence-based support, with stop smoking interventions across the system that complement each other, reduce duplication, work interdependently and are designed with the person at the centre to enable flexibility to meet specific needs.

The shared ambition and our collective aims set out the intentions to deliver high quality, universal quit offers as part of the comprehensive All Together Smokefree Cheshire and Merseyside programme. We recognise that locally commissioned services currently vary across the system for many reasons but agree that our collective ambition for stop smoking support is to standardise, maximise and integrate the provision available across the system.

## All Together Smokefree Cheshire & Merseyside Position Statement – Our shared ambition to help people who smoke to quit

### 5. Our Collective Aims for Cheshire & Merseyside Stop Smoking System

#### ***People who smoke will be:***

- Provided with the information they need to make their choice of which method best suits them, what it will require of them and what the benefits will be.
- Have flexibility to access stop smoking interventions that are convenient to them across the system, based on where people live and work.
- Encouraged, repeatedly and consistently, to make as many quit attempts as necessary, but at least annually – **if many more people try to quit more often, more people will succeed.**
- Welcomed back into services, however recent their last quit attempt was, acknowledging Tobacco Dependency as a chronic long-term relapsing condition, no motivated person who smokes will be declined support from stop smoking interventions.
- Steered towards tobacco dependence aids including medications and vapes that improve chances of quitting.

#### ***High quality stop smoking intervention will include:***

- Delivery of high quality evidence based stop smoking intervention in line with the [NCSCT Quality Standards](#)
- Delivery of interventions in a variety of settings including in the community through LA commissioned services, Primary Care, Community Pharmacy, and NHS through Hospital Trusts and Maternity Services, all delivering as per appropriate Standard Treatment Programmes.
- Development of standard service specifications that maintain universal evidence-based tobacco dependency treatment, taking a system level view of the additional needs of priority groups such as routine & manual workers, pregnant women, those with mental health conditions, and drug or alcohol users. Universal system-wide services can also support local place-based targeted work to maximise the reduction of health inequalities, including prioritising social housing tenants.
- Standard Transfer of Care Pathways to enable seamless continued provision of tobacco dependency aids and behavioural support as people move through the system and across places. This would include standardised approaches to data collection and sharing of information across organisations and pathways.
- Quality improvement embedded within all treating tobacco dependency and stop smoking interventions.

#### ***Tobacco Dependence Aids (including licenced medicines and vapes) will be universally available:***

- Provision of all available NICE recommended Stop Smoking Aids consistently enabled by a harmonised Integrated Care Board Formulary.
- Vaping is a recognised effective Tobacco Dependency aid, and whilst not risk free it should be presented as an alternative to smoking for adults aged 18 and over. However, vaping is not for the wider non-smoking population and children should never vape.

#### ***Workforce, training and environment will be prioritised:***

## **All Together Smokefree Cheshire & Merseyside Position Statement – Our shared ambition to help people who smoke to quit**

- Development of a systemwide Tobacco Dependency and Stop Smoking and wider Workforce plan to ensure delivery of sustainable and resilient quality services across organisations, through building local capacity and ensuring that the workforce has the right knowledge, skills and competencies to meet both current and future patient needs.
- A highly skilled and competent workforce, trained to national standards appropriate to the pathway they work in, with ongoing opportunities to access continual professional development.
- All NHS trusts and primary care services to commit to the NHS Smokefree pledge including implementing consistent and effective smokefree site policies and vaping policies that allow vaping amongst adults in outside areas on sites but not within buildings and enclosed spaces.

### ***Maximising the offer:***

- To expand the offer of high quality stop smoking interventions to be universally available with targeted support for locally agreed priority groups, including enhanced offer of support for people with mental health conditions who smoke.
- To expand NHS Tobacco Dependence Treatment services to enable 24/7 interventions for people who smoke and to those who access A&E and Outpatient departments.
- To ensure inclusion of opt-out pathways and stop smoking interventions in Targeted Lung Health Checks.

Cheshire & Merseyside is committed to achieving the ambition to reduce smoking rates to 5% or less by 2030, and to do this we need to be bold and ambitious. Our ultimate aim is to deliver an All Together Smokefree Cheshire and Merseyside, a true smokefree future, free from the death and disease from tobacco.

---

<sup>i</sup> ASH [Impact-of-smoking-on-Core20PLUS5-in-NHS-Cheshire-and-Merseyside-ICB\\_2023-09-06-101609\\_hzbl.pdf \(ash.org.uk\)](#)

<sup>ii</sup> CRUK [Tobacco kills one person every five minutes \(cancerresearchuk.org\)](#)

<sup>iii</sup> CRUK [Smoking prevalence projections for England based on data to 2021 \(cancerresearchuk.org\)](#)