

To: North Yorkshire GP practice managers and Community Pharmacies

Date: 16<sup>th</sup> April 2020

Re: **Stop Smoking Services Provision During COVID-19**

Dear Colleagues

In light of the current COVID-19 outbreak the guidance and information below has been agreed between North Yorkshire County Council Public Health, North Yorkshire Local Medical Committee and Community Pharmacy North Yorkshire.

### **Stop Smoking Services – National Guidance**

Supporting smokers to quit has been identified by the Chief Medical Officer and Public Health England as invaluable in the national response to coronavirus. Smokers are at increased risk of respiratory viral infection as smoking both increases someone's vulnerability to infection and reduces their ability to fight against it.

The latest Government guidance (see link below) provided by the National Centre for Smoking Cessation and Training (NCSCT) to protect smokers from coronavirus is as follows:

[https://www.ncsct.co.uk/publication\\_COVID-19\\_18.03.20.php](https://www.ncsct.co.uk/publication_COVID-19_18.03.20.php)

- Support for smokers should continue.
- Face-to-face stop smoking consultations should cease immediately but behavioural support should continue to be provided via telephone as per the standard treatment programme. [https://www.ncsct.co.uk/publication\\_ncsct-standard-treatment-programme.php](https://www.ncsct.co.uk/publication_ncsct-standard-treatment-programme.php). Proactive telephone support is an effective, evidence-based intervention when delivered in line with the NCSCT standard treatment programme.
- Carbon monoxide (CO) monitoring should be paused, smoking status can be 'self-reported' and not 'CO-verified'.
- Appropriate and locally agreed adaptations of medication pathways should be utilised to ensure that patient continue to receive stop smoking medications.

### **Pharmacy and GP In-House Stop Smoking Service**

Providers may continue to deliver their in-house SSS via telephone support as per the NCSCT guidance. If providers are unable to continue provision they should notify NY Public Health as soon as possible using the key contact details below. Support for current patients and new referrals will then be provided by Living Well Smokefree (LWSF), the North Yorkshire Specialist Stop Smoking Service. Referral to the LWSF service can be made by phone 01609 797272.

### **Stop Smoking Services Pharmacotherapy**

It is important to ensure that patients can continue to access their pharmacotherapy as it is key in supporting and achieving a quit. The North Yorkshire SSS pharmacotherapy pathways are dependent on GP and Pharmacy facilitation, to minimise the need for face to face contact and to enable staff distancing where possible the following changes have been agreed.

### **NRT Supply for In-House Service** (for individual receiving support from GP/Pharmacy)

- Length of NRT supply can be extended e.g. 4 weeks of NRT may be supplied as opposed to 1 week, however suitability must be assessed for each individual patient.
- Electronic issue and repeat dispensing should be utilised where possible.
- Collection of NRT should be as per the arrangements in place at each individual pharmacy.

Patient details should still be entered onto the Pharmoutcomes/Outcomes4Health system in the usual way.

### **NRT Voucher Scheme** (pharmacy only, for individuals receiving support from the LWSF service)

An electronic version of the NRT voucher can be provided by the Living Well Smokefree service via secure email to the pharmacy.

- It is not necessary for the patient to sign the NRT voucher.
- Length of NRT supply can be extended e.g. 4 weeks of NRT may be supplied as opposed to 1 week, however suitability must be assessed for each individual patient.
- Collection of NRT should be as per the arrangements in place at each individual pharmacy

The NRT voucher details should still be entered onto the PharmOutcomes system in the usual way.

### **Champix Supply**

Champix supply is facilitated through two routes:

- a letter of recommendation to a patients GP
- via a pharmacy signed up to the NYCC varenicline PGD.

Assessment of suitability for initiation and subsequent supply of Champix should still be completed for all patients but this can be completed by remote consultation as per arrangements in place per individual provider's business continuity plans. Suitability must be assessed for each individual patient.

Electronic issue of prescription for the initiation pack and electronic repeat dispensing for subsequent supply should be utilised where possible. Collection of Champix should be as per the arrangements in place at each individual provider.

For pharmacy supply, patient details should still be entered onto the Pharmoutcomes system in the usual way.

### **PharmOutcomes Templates**

All grace periods for data entry will be extended until 1st September 2020.

## Key Contact Details

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Kind Regards

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