



Cheshire and Merseyside

SMOKING ENDS HERE: AT WORK

Supporting smokefree workplaces
in Cheshire & Merseyside

SMOKING
ENDS HERE



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INTRODUCTION



Supporting the health and wellbeing of employees is essential for every organisation, regardless of size or sector. **Smoking Ends Here: At Work**, part of the wider Smoking Ends Here programme developed by Champs Public Health Collaborative, supports the ambition for Cheshire & Merseyside to become smokefree by 2030 by helping employers take practical action to support staff to quit smoking.

Stopping smoking can be difficult without the right support, but people are **three times more likely to quit successfully with specialist stop smoking services**. Employers can play an important role by raising awareness of this support and signposting staff to local help available through Smoking Ends Here: At Work.

This guide provides an overview of the programme and outlines the guidance, tools and resources available to help organisations support employees to stop smoking for good.



SMOKING IN CHESHIRE & MERSEYSIDE



Around **215,000** adults in Cheshire & Merseyside still smoke (**10.4%**), with rates significantly higher among routine and manual workers, highlighting the importance of targeted support in the workplace.

Nationally, around **1 in 4 people** in routine and manual occupations smoke. In Cheshire & Merseyside, **19.5%** of workers aged **18-64** in these roles smoked in 2023 - around twice the rate of other occupational groups.

Routine and manual roles may involve long shifts, physical demands, repetitive tasks and high-pressure environments, where smoking can easily become part of the daily routine.

Workplaces are well placed to play an important role in helping employees break this cycle, access support and take their first step towards a successful quit attempt.



A woman with short, vibrant pink hair is smiling warmly. She is wearing a blue work shirt with white reflective stripes on the sleeves and chest. Her shirt has several pockets, and a yellow and black tool is tucked into one of them. The background is a solid bright blue, with a thick black vertical bar on the left and a thick black horizontal bar across the middle. A large white circle is positioned on the left side, overlapping the woman's shoulder and the background.

**THE BENEFITS
OF SUPPORTING
A SMOKEFREE
WORKFORCE**

Supporting employees to stop smoking can make a real difference to both staff wellbeing and the day-to-day running of your organisation. Employers who promote access to stop smoking support often see benefits across their workforce, including improved health, reduced sickness absence and stronger staff engagement.

Evidence also shows that workplace support increases the likelihood that employees will make a successful quit attempt, helping organisations play a practical role in supporting staff who want to stop smoking for good.

Health benefits

- Smoking is linked to around 50 serious diseases, including cancer, heart disease, stroke, bronchitis, emphysema and COPD. People who smoke are also more vulnerable to everyday illnesses such as coughs, colds and flu, increasing the risk of both short-term sickness absence and longer-term health problems.
- The benefits of quitting begin almost immediately. Within 20 minutes, heart rate starts to return to normal, and within 24 hours nicotine and carbon monoxide are cleared from the body. After one year, the risk of heart attack halves, and after 15 years it is similar to that of a non-smoker.
- With around 71% of smokers saying they want to quit, providing access to structured stop smoking support can make an important difference in helping employees achieve this goal.

Workplace advantages

- Many organisations that support employees to quit smoking report a healthier, more active and focused workforce, fewer disruptions from smoking breaks, and improved morale, with staff feeling cared for, supported and motivated.
- Smoking can make people more susceptible to everyday illnesses such as chest infections that may lead to time away from work, so supporting more of your team to stop smoking can help improve wellbeing and support lower absence levels.
- Employees also experience less stress linked to the financial pressures of smoking. Supporting staff to access stop smoking support can strengthen an organisation's reputation as a responsible employer that actively promotes health and wellbeing.
- Providing employees with the right support to quit smoking can make a life-changing difference and is a practical step organisations can take to improve workforce wellbeing and create a healthier working environment.

**HOW SMOKING
ENDS HERE CAN
SUPPORT YOUR
WORKPLACE**





Smoking Ends Here: At Work provides practical support to help organisations raise awareness of stop smoking services and make it easier for employees to access support through their workplace. The programme offers a flexible package of free support, tailored to the size and needs of your organisation and delivered in partnership with local specialist stop smoking services.

Support is delivered by trained advisers and designed to fit around working environments and shift patterns, making it easier for employees who want to quit to access help.

Support available for your workplace:

- Opportunities for tailored support with your workforce
- Access to free Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) such as patches, gum and more for eligible employees to help manage cravings
- Access to specialist behavioural support from trained stop smoking advisers
- A suite of ready-to-use downloadable resources to promote support across your workplace, including posters, leaflets and internal communications content. **To request the toolkit, please contact workforce@thisisinfluential.com**



Engagement activity: stop smoking clinics

Specialist stop smoking advisers can deliver tailored support directly in your workplace, helping employees take the next step towards quitting. Sessions can be provided one-to-one or in groups and include practical advice on managing cravings, building healthier habits, and understanding the health and financial benefits of stopping smoking.

Support is typically delivered over a 6-12 week programme, starting with an initial assessment followed by regular sessions and ongoing behavioural support. Delivery is flexible and can be arranged around your organisation's needs, shift patterns and working environment to make support easier to access.

Engagement activity: workplace training

We offer practical training to help staff become workplace champions who support colleagues to stop smoking. This short session builds confidence to start supportive conversations, give brief advice and signpost co-workers to local stop smoking services, with additional online resources available to reinforce learning.

Workplace champions help create a supportive environment that encourages colleagues to access help. Training is delivered by local stop smoking specialists at a time that fits around your business.



Access to free Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT)

The programme provides employees with free or reduced-cost access to nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) through local stop smoking services, helping them choose a quitting approach that works for them. Using stop smoking aids such as nicotine replacement products or e-cigarettes can significantly improve the chances of quitting successfully.

Access to specialist behavioural support

Employees can access free specialist behavioural support from trained stop smoking advisers through local services. This personalised support helps individuals understand their smoking habits, manage cravings and triggers, and build confidence to make a successful quit attempt.

Support is flexible and can be delivered in a way that fits around working patterns, making it easier for employees to access consistent guidance throughout their quit journey.

Around half of smokers still try to quit using willpower alone. Using stop smoking aids makes people one and a half times more likely to quit and combining these with specialist behavioural support makes them three times more likely to succeed.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Getting involved:

Q. How can our organisation access support through the programme?

A. You can register your interest by contacting the Smoking Ends Here workplace team at workforce@thisisinfluential.com. We will discuss your organisation's needs and agree the most appropriate level of support available for your workplace.

Q. Is there a cost to take part?

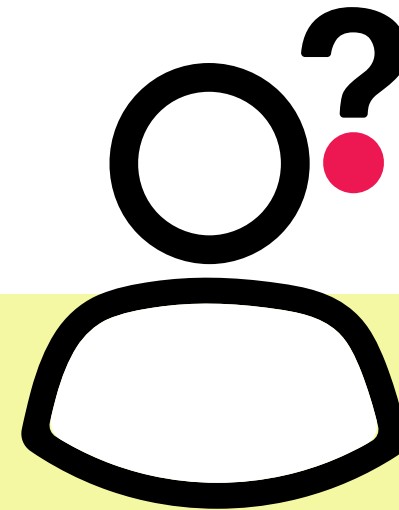
A. No. All support provided through the Smoking Ends Here: At Work programme is free for both employers and employees.

Q. Which workplaces can take part?

A. The programme is open to organisations across Cheshire & Merseyside. Support is flexible and tailored depending on workforce size and local stop smoking service availability.

Q. Is there a deadline to register interest?

A. For this phase of the programme, we encourage organisations to register their interest by the end of May so we can begin planning and scheduling any on-site workplace activity. However, if this timeframe doesn't work for your organisation, please still get in touch - we will do our best to arrange support at a time that suits you.



Support available for employees:

Q. What support can employees access?

A. Employees can access free behavioural support from trained stop smoking advisers, up to 12 weeks of nicotine replacement therapy (NRT), and in some workplaces, on-site stop smoking clinics.

Q. Do employees need to see a GP before accessing support?

A. No. Employees can access stop smoking support directly through local services without needing to see a GP.

Q. Is support confidential?

A. Yes. All support is delivered by specialist stop smoking advisers and is confidential.

Q. Is there a time limit for support?

A. Structured stop smoking support is typically delivered over a 6-12 week period. However, employees can contact services at any time if they would like support.



Support available for employers:

Q. What support will our organisation receive?

A. All participating workplaces receive a ready-to-use communications toolkit to help promote stop smoking support internally. Larger workplaces may also be offered on-site engagement activity such as stop smoking clinics or workplace champion training.

Q. What is workplace champion training?

A. Workplace champion training helps nominated staff feel confident supporting colleagues who want to stop smoking by starting supportive conversations and signposting them to local stop smoking services. Training is supported by the Cheshire and Merseyside Smoking Cessation Training Hub, which offers free on-site and online modules and resources to build knowledge and confidence in delivering effective smoking cessation support.

Q. How many employees can take part in workplace training sessions?

A. Training numbers are flexible and can be agreed with your local stop smoking service depending on your organisation's size and operational needs.

Q. Do we need to provide space for on-site clinics or training?

A. If your workplace is offered on-site support, a suitable private space is helpful. The delivery team will work with you to agree what is required.

Q. Can support be arranged around shift patterns?

A. Yes. Support is designed to be flexible and can be delivered in ways that fit around working patterns wherever possible.



Programme delivery:

Q. How long does workplace support last?

A. Where on-site clinics are delivered, they are typically provided over a 6-12 week period. Communications resources and referral pathways remain available throughout the programme.

Q. Who delivers the support?

A. Support is delivered by trained local stop smoking advisers working in partnership with the Smoking Ends Here programme, which is run by the Cheshire and Merseyside Public Health Collaborative.

Q. Do we need a workplace smoking policy to take part?

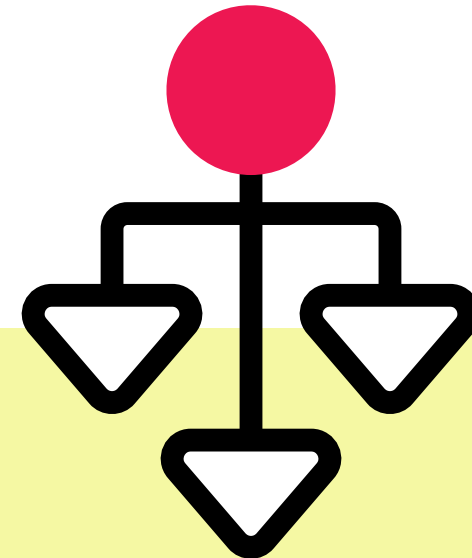
A. No. The programme focuses on supporting voluntary access to stop smoking services rather than introducing workplace stop smoking policies.

Q. How much time will participation require from our organisation?

A. Training numbers are flexible and can be agreed with your local stop smoking service depending on your organisation's size and operational needs.

Q. Who should coordinate this within our organisation?

A. This is often led by HR, wellbeing leads, occupational health teams or site managers, but we can work with whichever contact is most appropriate for your workplace.



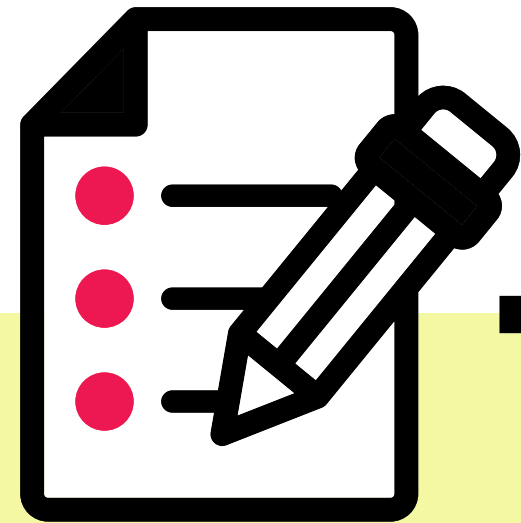
Monitoring and impact:

Q. How will the programme measure engagement?

A. Employees accessing services will be asked to quote the referral code SEHWORK, which helps track participation and referrals linked to workplace activity.

Will employers receive feedback about participation?

A. Where possible, summary information about engagement levels will be shared. Individual employee information remains confidential.



THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING SMOKING ENDS HERE: AT WORK

To request resources or
find out more, contact

workforce@thisisinfluential.com