



QUITlink

Case study:

At RelateCare we are always striving to expand our range of healthcare contact center services. Alongside post-discharge calls, medication adherence, physician referral, centralized appointment scheduling, nurse advice and triage, guided questionnaires, we have now added a smoking cessation program. For the last year, RelateCare has been entrusted by the HSE to manage its QUITlink smoking cessation multi-channel advice and support hotline.

The objective of the interactive QUITlink service is to convert contacts from smokers into quit attempts by functioning as a one-stop-shop linking new and returning clients to cessation supports and advice.

So far, it has been a great success.

The program has contributed to the biggest drop in smoking prevalence since 2009. Smoking prevalence for 2014 is 19.5%, this is a drop of 2% from 2013 – equating to 70,000 individuals quitting smoking. Smoking related disease in Ireland, however, remains the single biggest preventable cause of illness and death with roughly 5,200 tobacco related deaths annually. Ireland has set a target of being effectively smoke-free by 2025, equating to less than 5% prevalence among the population.

RelateCare and the QUITlink program are a big part of achieving this goal.

Who is it for?

The program is aimed at:

- any smoker who is interested in making a quit attempt.
- those who have quit and would like support to stay quit.
- these who have relapsed and would like to quit again.

A key aspect of the programme is to support smokers to stop smoking for good. It focuses on abrupt cessation and 'not a puff' after the quit date. Therefore, the QUIT programme is not suitable for smokers who:

- only want to reduce their level of smoking, not quit for good
- are not willing to commit to abrupt cessation and 'not a puff' rule

How does it work?

The RelateCare QUIT team are fully trained cessation support staff – all have successfully completed the NCSCT Standard Treatment Programme training and Stop smoking behavioural support by phone training. The team delivers stop smoking behavioural support via phone, web and social media. The service is always delivered in a friendly, positive, supportive and non-judgemental manner.

The QUIT programme is a standard treatment programme that uses behavioural support and evidence based stop smoking medication and treatments to support smokers through their quit attempt.

What does it include?

The programme begins with a "Pre-quit consultation". This explores with smokers their reasons for wanting to quit, what techniques they can use to help with a quit attempt, the types of evidence based stop smoking medication and treatments available, their readiness to set a quit date and the steps they need to take to be ready to quit on that day.

Once the client chooses to set a QUIT date and enrol in the programme they will be given behavioural support via:

- Daily emails for 6 weeks after their QUIT date
- A scheduled support call on their QUIT date
- A scheduled support call each week for 4 weeks after their QUIT date

Clients are encouraged to join our facebook page and use the information on www.quit.ie also.

We encourage clients to ring the service in between the scheduled calls if they feel the need for extra support.

The role of the QUIT Team is to encourage, motivate and support the client to determine whether they are ready to quit and to identify steps they can take to help with quitting and staying quit. It is not the role of the QUIT to advise or tell clients what to do
Communication options:

- QUITphone – live, free phone helpline service with the option of engaging in QUITsupport
- QUITchat – online chat facility through quit.ie
- QUITsocial – via Facebook and Twitter accounts
- QUITtext – responding to contacts via SMS as well as contacting individuals via SMS
- One-to-one services: This is a face to face local service available throughout the country
- QUITreferrals: Potential to accept referrals from healthcare professionals and other smoking cessation support services

Facts and figures for January 2015:

769

calls from smokers

7,788

New Twitter followers and Facebook likes

1,131

calls to smokers

189

Live Chats

1155

emails received

48,869

Visits to QUIT.ie

158

emails sent

4,898

QUITkits ordered

5,944

texts received