

## ShowCase

### Lose the Fags

**Topic:** Smoking

**Organisation:** NHS Stockport

**Location:** Stockport (North West England)

**Dates:** January 2007 to September 2010

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### Overview

NHS Stockport set out to increase the number of residents (particularly men and women with preschool age children) accessing smoking cessation services in Brinnington, an estate in the north of Stockport with a particularly high smoking prevalence.

This was achieved through a two-strand process of new service development and interactive communication under the banner of the 'Lose the Fags' brand. The central premise of the Lose the Fags social marketing initiative was community partnerships and ownership, with existing local organisations (namely a community gym and a children's centre) and their staff becoming Lose the Fags champions.

### Results:

- The total number of quit attempts in Brinnington increased by 49 per cent, from 149 in the year prior to intervention launch (2008/09) to 220 during 2009/10
- The number of successful quits increased from 60 in 2008/09 to 84 in 2009/10
- At least 519 residents received a brief intervention and signposting to services from the project team
- At least 111 people made direct contact with a new or existing service as a result of Lose the Fags – of these, at least 82 people went on to make a supported quit attempt

## 1. BEHAVIOUR

- To double the number of residents (particularly men and women with preschool age children) accessing smoking cessation services in Brinnington

## 2. CUSTOMER ORIENTATION

Focus groups used to inform the primary research were segmented by their current 'stage' in the stop smoking process. These consisted of;

- Hardened smokers with no intention of quitting
- Smokers who had tried but failed to quit
- Smokers who were contemplating quitting
- Successful quitters
- Those currently in the process of quitting

Interviews were also held with key health professionals in Brinnington to explore possible improvements to smoking cessation services to make them more consumer-centric.

## 3. THEORY

- **Stages of Change Theory:** aims to move people from pre-contemplation of a new behaviour, through contemplation, towards action and maintenance
- **Social Norms Theory:** People's behaviour is strongly influenced by their perception of how other members of their social group behave and their level of desire for conformity with the group

## 4. INSIGHT

- Smoking is very much a part of Brinnington life and is highly visible
- With little money, time or 'personal space', smoking becomes an emotional crutch on which people rely for stress management and a form of escapism
- Low confidence is a considerable barrier to community participation, so services in a trusted, safe and familiar environment with familiar faces is essential
- Residents did not want to visit the GP practice for smoking advice, as they considered the GP for 'sick' people

## 5. EXCHANGE

### Barriers

- Much social interaction between families, neighbours and friends in Brinnington revolve around smoking
- Social support networks are largely made up of smokers
- Trusted method of stress relief and escapism
- Irregular work shift patterns make visiting a GP problematic

### Motivators

- Desire to be a good role model for children
- Financial cost of smoking
- Ill-health from smoking

## 6. COMPETITION

- As the area of highest deprivation in Stockport, Brinnington receives a multitude of health and improvement messages and interventions. As a result, there is a sense of saturation in Brinnington among residents from external influence
- To quit smoking would be to go against the social norm and risk social ostracism
- Brinnington smokers are tired of being 'nagged' into quitting and are unlikely to succeed or make an attempt because their support networks consist of smokers

## 7. SEGMENTATION

The target audience were segmented by their behaviour, geography, gender and life stage.

As a result, men and women with preschool age children, who smoked and lived on the estate, were chosen as the target audiences for the project.

## 8. METHODS MIX

- A stop smoking service at the local gym which enabled men to counter the ill-effects of giving up smoking by using exercise to manage their anger and stress
- Stop smoking services for women at the local children's centre that included crèche facilities
- Freephone and 'text-back' booking service
- Branded communications materials, including; leaflets, posters and collateral, such as T-shirts, mugs and pens, with the text and freephone numbers clearly displayed
- Coverage in local newspapers and on radio stations
- Presence at local community events