

No Smoking Day: 9th March 2022

Communications toolkit

This toolkit supports local campaign activity for No Smoking Day 2022. No Smoking Day is 9th March and the theme agreed for this year is: "Don't give up on giving up. Every time you try to stop smoking, you're a **step closer to success.**" We are using the voice of health care professionals to communicate this message in the assets we have created.

This toolkit is designed to support activity on and around No Smoking Day, with partners encouraged to extend their communications activity in the month that follows, to expand its impact on smokers.

The toolkit provides:

- Information about the campaign content
- Campaign aims and key messages
- Links to assets to support local amplification work
- Templates for social media, emails, websites and local PR

This work has been developed collaboratively between ASH and Breathe 2025 with support from OHID Marketing, NHS England, GM Health and Social Care Partnership, Fresh North East, Stop Smoking London, the British Thoracic Society and the BMA.

Contact quit@todayistheday.co.uk if you have any questions.

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1. The campaign and its aims

1.1 Background to No Smoking Day

For many years, activity for national No Smoking Day was co-ordinated by the charity of the same name, until it closed in 2011. The British Heart Foundation continued to co-ordinate activity for a period afterwards. Although there used to be national co-ordination, it was always a locally led campaign, with people finding inspiring ways to engage their smokers locally.

To better support people to do this Breathe 2025 in Yorkshire and The Humber and Action on Smoking and Health came together last year to support a co-ordinated set of messages and assets alongside other regional and national partners. In 2022 we are doing this again building on the success of last year.

1.2 This year's campaign

We are utilising a website set up by Breathe 2025 to store all the assets for the campaign: www.todayistheday.co.uk This toolkit will also walk you through this year's campaign and assets. We encourage you to use No Smoking Day to kick off longer term communications activity using the 'Today Is the Day' branding to expand the reach of No Smoking Day beyond 9th March.

We know that many of you would like resources sooner and that capacity this year will be compromised due to COVID-19. This project has no national funding and has been developed through in-kind resource and funding from some regions to undertake filming. This has limited our ability to develop the campaign and toolkit any sooner. However, whatever you are able to do locally with limited time and capacity is great.

This is about a moment and a movement with a positive message to smokers that they can quit, that quitting can be life-changing and there is help out there for them. Today is the day.

Paid-for advertising

Some regions have found additional funding to run paid-for advertising. These are:

- London
- North East
- Greater Manchester

If you have funding locally to enable you to run paid-for advertising on social media, local radio or elsewhere — get in touch and we'll support you to utilise the assets to do this.

Purpose of No Smoking Day resources

- Support all areas to align around a single message for No Smoking Day
- Provide resources to extend that message beyond No Smoking Day to the month beyond using the Today is the Day branding
- Provide local organisations with assets they can use to promote quitting message and engage with local partners
- Engage media in message around No Smoking Day and raise the visibility of the day with smokers.

1.2 Theme for No Smoking Day 2022

Call to action for No Smoking Day 2022

- Smokers are asked to search smokefree to find support to make a quit attempt.
- We'll be embedding links to the NHS quitting smoking pages:
<https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/>

Overarching message: Don't give up on giving up. Every time you try to stop smoking, you're **a step closer to success**

This is a positive message that acknowledges that most smokers will have tried and failed to quit in the past but providing them with hope for future success. We are using the **voices of health professionals to communicate this message**. Doctors, nurses and others have always been trusted by smokers to deliver them health messages, but in the current environment with the impact of the pandemic, health professionals can have an even bigger impact on smokers.

Key messages for smokers

- Don't give up on giving up. Every time you try, you're a step closer to success.
- Every successful quit begins with a serious quit attempt. Make your next quit attempt this No Smoking Day.
- Many smokers do not quit on their first attempt and need several tries before they succeed.
- The sooner you stop the greater the health gains but whenever you stop your health will benefit.

- Getting support really boosts your chances of quitting - you're up to three times as likely to succeed.

Health professionals

While smokers are the most important people to hear our message about quitting on No Smoking Day, we also want those working in health to know how important their messages to smokers are and what a difference they can make.

Smokers are more likely to try and quit if advised to by a trusted health professional and given advice about the most effective ways to stop.

Our key messages for health professionals:

- The single best thing a smoker can do to improve their health is to stop. Quitting can add as much as a decade to life expectancy.
- Smokers expect you to talk to them about their smoking; they know it's bad for them and most want to quit.
- What you say to smokers matters. Even if they don't stop immediately, your advice will influence their future attempts.
- Raising the issue of smoking, and advising people on how to stop, can take as little as 30 seconds. The NCSCT provides a [free online training module](#) on how to do this well.
- Informing smokers of the most effective ways to quit is the best way to help them. If they are referred to a stop smoking service, advised to use medications like NRT or encouraged to use an e-cigarette to quit, they are more likely to succeed.
- Smokers in deprived circumstances, with mental health conditions or other challenging life circumstances, still want to stop smoking but they face more barriers to achieving that goal – you can help connect them to best support to help them succeed.

Quitting during covid

The pandemic continues to place significant pressures on society and services. You will know what is available to help smokers locally and how they can best access this. With so much change, it's to be remembered that other partners might benefit from being reminded ahead of No Smoking Day what is out there.

Smokers are also experiencing a tough time. Smokers are more likely to be living in disadvantaged circumstances, with evidence showing that mental distress has increased for smokers during the pandemic. Quitting smoking can help people to deal with the

pressures of the pandemic but they may need more advice and support to help them achieve this.

1.3 Evidence behind the campaign

Every time you quit, you're closer to success: It's estimated that the average smoker takes 30 quit attempts to succeed.¹ Just under 40% of smokers try to quit every year in England and around a quarter of these will succeed.² However, many more smokers are contemplating quitting or engaged in behaviours such as cutting down. Every quit attempt should be seen as making progress and an opportunity to learn, encouraging smokers to get into the habit of quitting.

Advice from health professionals can make the difference: While health professionals can be concerned that patients will be hostile to behaviour change advice, most people welcome it.³ Even very simple brief interventions increase the likelihood of a person staying 'quit' 12 months later.⁴ It's not just in the primary care context that health professionals' interventions can make a difference; approaches such as 'stop before the op' have also been shown to succeed.⁵

Smokers given advice on *how* to quit rather than *why* to quit are more likely to succeed: Providing advice on how to quit and assistance to do so is more likely to lead to a successful quit attempt than simply advising smokers to quit on medical grounds.⁶ Health professionals should follow the Very Brief Advice model from the NCSCT and undertake their short training module to ensure that their practice is most likely to prompt smokers to stop successfully.⁷

2. Local promotion of No Smoking Day

There are a range of activities which local authorities and NHS organisations can do to extend the reach of the campaign and encourage more smokers into local stop smoking services. Below are a suite of ideas and links to resources.

2.1 Voices of local health professionals

This year we want to create a movement of doctors, nurses, pharmacists, physiotherapists, dentists and others calling on smokers to take a step closer to quitting for good. We have national films and assets available for use, but it will be even more

powerful to have local voices. Here are some ideas for using local clinical voices in your campaign:

- Identify a core network of local health professionals willing to take action on No Smoking Day but send out communications to as many health professionals as possible encouraging them to get involved.
- Professionals can engage on social media with messages for smokers, reach out to patients in their care, put up posters and share leaflets – anything which might reach smokers with the message that Today is the Day!
- Record short video clips with your key network. These can be done in a low-tech way on phones or through video conferencing platforms. These clips should be health professionals telling smokers in their own words why quitting matters and where they can get help locally. Encourage people to talk from their own experience about successful quitters who have inspired them in the past.
- Reach out to senior clinical leaders in your area to back the campaign and encourage their colleagues to get involved too. You may have opportunities through the rollout of the tobacco dependency treatment programme under the NHS Long Term Plan.
- Use our templates to create local visuals using local health professionals. Posters or social media images using a photo and a quote can be powerful ways to communicate quickly.
- Let professionals know that No Smoking Day is the start of the campaign, and they can continue to give smokers key messages about quitting for the rest of the month and throughout the year.

2.2 Direct communications to smokers

Website branding and information

You can use the Today Is The Day branded assets on your websites, so they visually align with the campaign.

You may also want to add website text to reflect the messages in the campaign.

Posters and leaflets

Identifying local places where information could be prominently displayed (beyond the usual GP practice) could be an effective way of extending the campaign message.

The downloadable assets include files which can be adapted for local use as either a poster or leaflet.

Contacting past service users and GP patients

Direct communication to smokers has been shown to significantly increase footfall to stop smoking services, particularly contact via GPs. Below are some template text and emails which you can adapt locally:

- Suggested text for smokers in touch with service: *Today is the day to stop smoking. Quitting now can improve how you feel both physically and mentally and protect your health. Contact [local Stop Smoking Service name and number] or text Today is the Day to [local text number] for telephone support and medication to quit.*
- Suggested text for GPs to send smokers: *There has never been a more important time to look after your mental and physical health. Your doctor would like you to stop smoking today. Contact [local Stop Smoking Service name and number] or text Today is the Day to [local text number] for telephone support and medication to quit.*
- Suggested email: *There has never been a more important time look after your mental and physical health. Stopping smoking has immediate benefits to your physical health and long term will significantly reduce your chances of developing many illnesses including heart disease, diabetes, COPD, stroke and cancer. While quitting can feel stressful in the short term, research shows that once you're past the withdrawal stage your mental health also improves. Today is the day to stop smoking. Get in touch to find out how we can help make quitting less stressful. [local contact information]*

Staff in your organisation

No Smoking Day is not just about engaging with smokers in our services and in our communities but also those in our workplaces. It's a great chance to reach out to smokers employed by our organisations and let them know what support they can get to stop.

Your organisation may provide staff with time off to support quitting, access to specific staff programmes or funded quitting aids. Some organisations have been funding staff access to apps to help them to quit.

Whether your organisation provides extra support to staff who smoke or connects them with the available local support, it's important to reach out to them. Remember it's more likely that smokers are in lower paid roles in the organisation and may not necessarily be office based.

2.3 Engaging your organisation

This year No Smoking Day will also coincide with the relaunch of the **Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control** and the **NHS Smokefree Pledge**. These commitment tools for local organisations have been updated to reflect the Government's smokefree 2030 ambition and the commitment of NHS England to roll out tobacco dependency treatment for smokers in acute, maternity and mental health settings.

Over half of local councils with a public health responsibility have already signed the Declaration and many Trusts and CCGs have signed the Pledge but there is nothing to stop them doing this again on No Smoking Day. If your organisation is yet to sign, then this is a great chance to do so.

The Declaration and Pledge are endorsed nationally by health leaders including the Public Health Minister, Chief Medical Officer and the Chief Executive of NHS England. Locally they are signed by senior leaders in an organisation committing the organisation to take action to address the harms from smoking.

Find out more about the current [Declaration](#) and [Pledge](#). If your organisation wants to be one of the first to adopt the new Declaration and Pledge, then please let us know and we'll send you further information admin@smokefreeaction.org.uk

2.4 Engaging partners

One of the ways to amplify activity is to further engage local partners to reach smokers within their networks. Actions could include:

- Briefing relevant partners on the campaign and key messages, providing access to the assets.
- Engaging primary care partners to text or email all smokers registered on their systems.
- Engaging other stakeholders with a direct relationship with sizable populations of smokers to encourage them to reach out to smokers.
- Reaching out to target populations locally such as people with mental health conditions, pregnant women and their families and front-line workers.
- Translating relevant materials for high need groups. Please note where local translation takes place, please provide us with access to this nationally so we can share with others.
- Making a specific offer to NHS staff who smoke through their employers or other local mechanisms.

2.5 Social media

We'll be using the hashtag #TodayIsTheDay and #NoSmokingDay to promote the campaign.

We recommend using a combination of both Twitter and Facebook (and others such as Instagram) as part of your local social media approach. While Twitter is a great platform for reaching stakeholders and health professionals, Facebook is still the best platform to reach people who smoke.

Section 5 below includes template tweets and Facebook posts which you can adapt for local use. You can access the visual assets here:

- [Google Drive](#)
- If you have any problems accessing assets, please contact quit@todayistheday.co.uk

Here are some additional tips for using social media to support the campaign:

- Create video clip interviews of spokespeople for social media channels – videos should ideally be a maximum of two minutes to be able to be hosted organically on Twitter and Facebook. Be sure to use the campaign hashtag #TodayIsTheDay.
- Facebook and Twitter posts – use the hashtag #TodayIsTheDay so all partners following can see this and support.
- People are increasingly using local neighbourhood groups on social media. Can your stop smoking service engage with any of these to post content and advice?
- Boosting Facebook posts can be a very cost-effective way to promote to your audience the type of content you think will benefit them. A little bit of budget goes a long way, and you can target by area, age etc. If you would like further advice on paid-for Facebook advertising, please get in touch quit@todayistheday.co.uk

2.6 News media

We will be putting out a national press release focused on what motivates smokers to quit and why advice from health professionals matters. We will provide an embargoed press release to the Smokefree Action Coalition list ahead of publication and a template which can be adapted locally. If you are not signed up for SFAC updates, please email admin@smokefreeaction.org.uk

Do create your own local PR based on local stories and information. We'd love to know what you're putting out so do let us know at press@ash.org.uk

Below are some further tips on local PR work to support the campaign:

- Develop a press release for your organisation for local print and online news outlets to back the campaign and to encourage people to quit smoking – use quotes from your local health professionals/ Director of Public Health/ elected lead for health.
- It can be very motivational for people who smoke to see other people doing so and succeeding – so it is important to highlight that people are quitting smoking right now and that others are trying. Do you have any case studies of local people making a quit attempt, or former smokers who have quit previously who would participate in a press release?
- Think about what publications you have access to internally or via partners which could carry stories about the campaign – e.g. council publications and emails, local NHS Trust publications etc

2.7 Key local statistics

This section provides you with links to the data which can be used to localise PR. The links below take you to the Local Tobacco Profiles which include local breakdowns of the APS data. ONS have cautioned that 2020 data is not comparable with previous years due to a change in methodology so you may opt to use the 2019 figures which are part of a consistent time series.

- Find your local smoking prevalence including the number of smokers in your local authority [here](#)
- Find the difference in prevalence between socioeconomic groups in your local authority [here](#).
- Smoking related mortality in your local authority can be found [here](#) <https://bit.ly/3f6yfRD> divide the 'count' column by three to get your annual figure.
- Find your local figure on the number of smoking attributable hospital admissions each year [here](#).
- £17 billion on potential wealth is lost from the national economy in England each year as a result of lost productivity due to smoking. Reducing smoking will help support economic recovery from COVID-19, reducing impacts like smoking related sick days and economic inactivity. Find the cost of lost productivity due to

smoking in your local area in the ASH Ready Reckoner here:
<https://ash.org.uk/ash-ready-reckoner/>

- Each year hundreds more children take up smoking, [download your local authority figures here.](#)
- Smoking has a profound impact on inequality. Find more local stats [here.](#)

3. Social media and assets

Below are assets you can use organically on social media, but you can also use them in paid-for advertising through boosted posts. We're happy to provide further advice where your organisation wants to invest additional resource in further paid for advertising using social media. ASH will not be advertising through the campaign on Facebook or Twitter but locally this can be a good way to amplify activity, particularly where you have an established social media presence.

Please feel free to adapt the template posts below to include local information and links as appropriate.


↓ 3.1 Downloadable social media assets


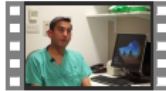



You can download ready-to-use #TodayIsTheDay social media assets using the links below.

- [Google Drive](#)


🐦 3.2 Suggested tweets

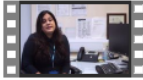



For #NoSmokingDay [9th March]

Suggested text	Suggested media*
<p>[ORGANISATION NAME] is supporting #TodayIsTheDay as part of #NoSmokingDay 2022. Don't give up on giving up. Take the first step on your quit journey today, visit www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/</p>	 <p>✓ The Sign</p>



<p>Don't give up on giving up this #NoSmokingDay 2022. For advice on making quitting easier visit www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/</p>	 <p>✔ Today</p>
<p>NHS staff want to see more smokers stopping for good on #NoSmokingDay. Get their advice here.</p>	 <p>✔ ASH Mr Paritosh Sharma _ Patient</p>
<p>Every time you try to stop smoking, you're a step closer to success. Start your quit attempt on #NoSmokingDay www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/</p>	 <p>✔ Steps</p>
<p>Are you ready to say goodbye to smoking? The health benefits from quitting smoking start from the day you stop and build over time. Find out how and make #NoSmokingDay the day that you give quitting a go https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/for-your-body/quit-smoking/what-happens-when-you-quit-smoking/ #TodayIsTheDay</p>	 <p>✔ ASH _ Dr Tasker_ Patient_a</p> <p>Or</p>  <p>✔ Smell</p>


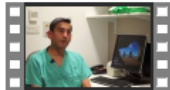
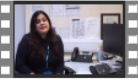



#TodayIsTheDay campaign – any time

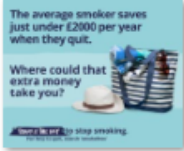
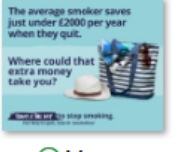
Suggested text	Suggested media*
<p>Dr Ruth Sharrock is a lung specialist who sees the heartbreak of smoking in her surgery every day. Listen to her story about why you should never give up on giving up. #TodayIsTheDay visit www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/</p>	 <p>✔ ASH _ Dr Ruth Sharrock _ Patient</p>

<p>Doctors, nurses and other health professionals don't want their patients who smoke to give up on quitting #TodayIsTheDay</p>	 <p>✓ ASH Dr Shanika Sharma _ Patient</p>
<p>Don't give up on quitting smoking – it can make you healthier, wealthier and happier – for more information and for help to quit smoking visit www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/ #TodayIsTheDay</p>	 <p>✓ Money</p>
<p>Even if you've smoked for many years, it's never too late to quit. #TodayIsTheDay – for tips, tools and support to stop visit www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/</p>	 <p>✓ ASH _ Dr Tasker _ Patient_b</p>
<p>Even if you've tried before, don't give up on quitting smoking. There's plenty of support and advice. Hear what health professionals have to say. Visit www.nhs.uk/smokefree and start your quitting journey #TodayIsTheDay</p>	 <p>✓ ASH _ Dr Tasker _ Patient_a</p>

f 3.3 Suggested Facebook posts

Suggested text	Suggested media*
<p>[ORGANISATION NAME] is supporting #TodayIsTheDay as part of #NoSmokingDay 2022. Don't give up on giving up. Take the first step on your quit journey today, visit www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/</p>	 <p>✓ Sign</p> <p>Or</p>  <p>✓ Today</p>

<p>Dr Ruth Sharrock is a lung specialist who sees the heartbreak of smoking in her surgery every day. Listen to her story about why you should never give up on giving up. #TodayIsTheDay Visit www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/</p>	 <p>✔ ASH _ Dr Ruth Sharrock _ Patient</p>
<p>For #NoSmokingDay 2022 we're sharing the voices of health care professionals who desperately want to see their patients stop smoking. Hear their stories here. Visit www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/ for further advice #TodayIsTheDay</p>	 <p>✔ ASH Mr Paritosh Sharma _ Patient</p>
<p>Smoking damages your heart and lungs. Quitting smoking reduces your risk of disease and can also improve your mental health. If you smoke, quitting is one of the best things you can do for your health and your family. For help to quit head to www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/</p>	 <p>✔ ASH Dr Shanika Sharma _ Patient</p>
<p>Are you ready to say goodbye to smoking? The health benefits from quitting smoking start from the day you stop and build over time. Find out how and make today the day that you give quitting a go https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/for-your-body/quit-smoking/what-happens-when-you-quit-smoking/ #TodayIsTheDay</p>	 <p>✔ ASH _ Dr Tasker _ Patient_a</p>
<p>Even if you've tried stopping smoking before – don't give up on giving up. There are plenty of support options which can really improve your chances of quitting for good. Visit www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/ and start your quitting journey #TodayIsTheDay</p>	 <p>✔ Steps</p>
<p>There has never been a more important time to quit smoking. Even if you've tried before, don't give up on giving up – you can do it! The benefits to your health, bank balance and family will make such a difference.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Clear out old ashtrays, lighters and cigarettes * Get support – visit nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/ for advice on how to quit 	 <p>✔ Smell</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Think of your reasons for quitting – and keep them front of mind * Use stop smoking aids to help you manage cravings * Try new routines and remember you CAN do it <p>#TodayIsTheDay</p>	
<p>For many people, finances are tighter than ever right now. If you smoke 10 cigarettes a day, did you know that by stopping, you could save over £120 a month?</p>	 <p>✓ Money</p>
<p>Looking for ways to save money at the moment? Have you considered quitting smoking? People who smoke can save on average nearly £2000 a year by quitting!</p>	 <p>✓ Money</p>

All of the media shown is available in section 3.1: Downloadable social media assets. If you do not want to upload the videos, and would prefer to embed a YouTube link, the videos are available on the [ASH YouTube channel](#).

- ¹ <https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/6/6/e011045>
- ² <https://smokinginengland.info/graphs/top-line-findings>
- ³ <https://evidence.nihr.ac.uk/alert/most-patients-welcome-advice-from-gps-on-changing-their-behaviour-to-improve-health/>
- ⁴ https://www.cochrane.org/CD000165/TOBACCO_does-advice-from-doctors-encourage-people-who-smoke-to-quit
- ⁵ https://www.cochrane.org/CD002294/TOBACCO_can-people-be-helped-to-stop-smoking-before-they-have-surgery
- ⁶ <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1360-0443.2011.03770.x>
- ⁷ https://www.ncsct.co.uk/publication_VBA_2021.php