



## Press Release

21 December 2007

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**[embargoed until 00.01 on 31 December but can be used any time after that throughout January]**

### **Quitter from Manchester joins campaign to help smokers to get off cigarettes this New Year**

**Kate Sweeney, from Longsight, Manchester has now been smokefree for 5 months since quitting using the free support offered by the NHS.** This New Year, it is anticipated that 15,992 smokers across Manchester will try to stop smoking, and Kate is keen to share her story to help show others that it can be done.

Kate took the decision to stop smoking because of her health and the rising costs of cigarettes.

Kate says: "I was motivated to stop smoking when my new grandson was born. I didn't want him to smell the smoke when I held him. My house smelt of smoke, even though I smoked in the kitchen. I was finally spurred on to quit smoking when someone told me that I smelt, I was so embarrassed and hurt, but I knew I had to do something.

"I heard about the support available, through the NHS, to help quit smoking, from an email that came through at work. I signed up straight away."

Kate had support from an advisor and group sessions at the local Manchester Stop Smoking Service in Longsight and used patches to help to make her successful quit attempt. Kate says: "the support I received from Kim, stop smoking advisor and the drop in sessions at Manchester Stop Smoking Service has helped me quit for good."

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Since successfully quitting Kate has enjoyed the many benefits of a smokefree life. she said:

“I had a very bad cough, which I thought was due to my lung condition, but after I stopped smoking the cough disappeared.”

To help others such as Kate to get off cigarettes this New Year, a new NHS campaign has been launched to promote the range of free support available to give quitters the best chance of success.

The ‘Getting Off Cigarettes’ adverts, which will run until the end of March, feature a cityscape dotted with giant cigarettes to bring to life the challenge of quitting smoking and remind smokers that many others are going through similar experiences. Different rescue operations arrive on the scene to help smokers to ‘get off’ the cigarettes, illustrating the range of free stop smoking support provided by the NHS.

Local NHS Stop Smoking Services and the interactive ‘Together’ programme offer structured programmes of support to help smokers break their emotional attachment to smoking. To deal with the physical side of their addiction, smokers can also get a course of nicotine replacement therapy on prescription from the NHS.

The NHS Smokefree campaign has produced a free DVD called ‘Get Support’, which explains the various kinds of support available and features real-life quitters talking about their experiences of using the services. Quitters can order a copy of the DVD by pressing the red button during the TV adverts or by calling 0800 917 6699.

Abbie Paton, Senior Public Health Development Advisor, Stop Smoking Service, said: “We are gearing up for a busy New Year period and beyond at Manchester NHS Stop Smoking Service. With help, support and free or discounted nicotine replacement therapy now available at more places across Manchester than ever before, we hope to be able to make sure that the many thousands of local residents preparing to become smokefree in 2008 have the best chance of success.”

“Research has shown that smokers who quit with NHS support are up to four times more likely to succeed. Quitting is not easy and it can take some smokers several

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times to get off cigarettes for good. I'd urge anyone planning to quit this New Year to call 0800 917 6699 to order a free DVD and find out about the range of NHS support to help them make 2008 the year their resolution to quit actually sticks."

### **Ends**

Please contact,  
**Abbie Paton, Senior Public Health Advisor, Manchester Stop Smoking Service on 0797 790 9748 for:**

- Beta SP videos or high resolution stills of the NHS 'Getting Off Cigarettes' advertising campaign
- Information about free NHS services to help smokers quit, including Top Ten Tips for quitting
- Interviews with Kate Sweeney
- Interviews with an NHS stop smoking advisor

### **Notes to editors**

- The NHS Smokefree campaign has produced a free DVD which provides a 'behind-the-scenes' look at the range of free stop smoking support available from the NHS. Real-life quitters talk about how the NHS Stop Smoking Services, NHS Smoking Helpline and Together Programme worked for them and a doctor explains the different medical treatments to deal with nicotine cravings that are available on prescription from the NHS. To order a free DVD call 0800 917 6699
- The NHS Smoking Helpline (0800 169 0 169) provides expert, free, and friendly advice to smokers and those close to them. Advisors go through the range of options available from the NHS and can also refer callers to a local NHS Stop Smoking Service.
- Local NHS Stop Smoking Services offer ongoing free face-to-face support and advice close to people's homes. There are over 150 throughout the country, offering a range of services including one-to-one meetings and group discussions with trained cessation advisors. Research shows that smokers are up to four times more likely to give up successfully if they use their local NHS Stop Smoking Service together with NRT than they are if they use willpower alone.
- Smokers who want to quit can find details of their local NHS Stop Smoking Service and information on all the other support available by visiting [www.nhs.uk/gosmokefree](http://www.nhs.uk/gosmokefree) texting 'GIVE UP' and their full postcode to 88088 or asking their local GP practice, pharmacy or hospital.
- The NHS also offers an interactive cessation support programme, Together, which helps smokers to quit by providing advice at key stages of the giving up process through a range of communication methods including email, text messages, mailings and phone calls.
- Quitters can also sign up to [www.justgiving.com/smokefree](http://www.justgiving.com/smokefree) and quit smoking whilst raising money for a charity of their choice. Smokers making a quit attempt choose a charity from one of Justgiving's 2,000 member organisations for which to raise money and then encourage their friends and family to sponsor them as they beat their habits for good.