



## Press Release

26 August 2008

MPHDS 14

### Quit using tobacco during Ramadan

People from Black and Ethnic Minority (BME) communities are being encouraged to quit using tobacco during Ramadan. This year the religious obligation begins on Monday 1 September. Manchester Stop Smoking Service will provide advice and support to anyone who wants to quit smoking or using tobacco products during the 30 days of Ramadan.

With the run up to Ramadan leaflets and DVDs have been sent out to Mosques across the city. The leaflets 'Are you ready to stop using tobacco?' have been printed in Urdu, Bangla, Arabic and English. The DVDs feature the 'Manchester Smokefree Homes scheme' and 'Smoking during pregnancy'. Each section has been produced in Somali, Bangla, Urdu, Arabic and English to reach all communities.

The leaflets and DVDs inform people why it's important to stop smoking cigarettes and using tobacco products. Smoking is the main cause of premature death in the UK – killing more than 106,000 people per year. It leads to heart disease, strokes, cancer and many other fatal diseases. Cigarettes contain over 4,000 chemicals, such as arsenic, ammonia, cyanide, formaldehyde and carbon monoxide in the smoke which is dangerous to health.

Along with this breathing other people's cigarette smoke (second hand smoke), is a major cause of illness in babies and children. When your home is smokefree children are likely to be healthier, with less risk of illnesses such as coughing, wheezing and chest infections, asthma, middle ear infection, learning difficulties and behavioural problems.

In addition to cigarette smoking, many people also use tobacco in other ways, such as smoking Hookah, Sheesha pipes, Bidis and chew tobacco. Sheesha pipe smoking is 200 times more harmful than smoking one cigarette<sup>1</sup>. It causes cancer, respiratory (breathing) diseases e.g. emphysema and Coronary Heart Disease (CHD). South Asian community groups have a 50% higher risk of CHD than the UK population as a whole<sup>2</sup>.

More 1/3

Chewing tobacco in a number of forms, including Paan and Gutkah, has a number of risks such as throat, mouth, lip, or tongue cancer. When chewed by pregnant women it can reduce the growth of their unborn babies.

Aurangzaib Amirat (Abu Hamza), stop smoking specialist advisor will be visiting Mosques with important messages to stop using tobacco products. He said, "Ramadan is the best time for people to quit smoking cigarettes and chewing tobacco for good. While people are Fasting they will need help with cravings, so I will be visiting Mosques across the city to provide advice and support. Also to help people quit we provide Nicotine Replacement Therapy (HRT) i.e. patches etc."

Aurangzaib (Abu Hamza) will be visiting the following Mosques:

- ❑ Al Falah Mosque, 79 Heywood Street, Cheetham Hill M8 0TX
- ❑ Madina Mosque, 2 Barlow Road, Levenshulme M19 3DJ
- ❑ Al Quba Mosques and Shahporan Centre, 109 Beresford Road, Longsight M13 0TA
- ❑ Victoria Park Mosque, 32 Upper Park Road, Victoria Park, Rusholme, M 14 5RU
- ❑ Al Furqan Islamic Centre, 42 Great Southern Street, Rusholme, M 14 4EZ
- ❑ Disbury Mosque and Islamic Centre, 271 Burton Road, West Didsbury, M 20 2WA

For dates and times of visits; or for help and advice to stop smoking or chewing tobacco, call Aurangzaib on 07967 441813.

Abbie Paton, Senior Public Health Development Advisor, said: "Observant Muslims don't eat, drink or smoke during daylight hours so it's a good opportunity to promote the Manchester Stop Smoking Service."

**Ends**

For more information call  
Jenny Cowell, Communications Officer, on 0161 861 2916

## Notes to editors

1 <sup>1</sup> Syrian Centre of Tobacco Studies

2 <sup>2</sup> British Heart Foundation

3 Latest statistics released by the NHS Information Centre for those accessing Manchester Stop Smoking Service:

Clients by ethnicity April – August 08				
Ethnicity	Smokefree	Smoking	Unknown	Grand total
Indian	4	6	2	12
Pakistani	10	30	17	57
Bangladeshi	7	7	4	18
Other Asian	14	9	4	27
				114

4 Manchester Stop Smoking Service is part of Manchester Community Health which is the provider arm of Manchester Primary Care Trust (PCT).

5 Manchester Stop Smoking Service provides support in many places across the city including pharmacies, hospitals, clinics, community centres and markets. Offering a text service facility for people in all communities across the city, if their first language is not English they can text LANG plus the language in which they would like to be called back in to 81025. An interpreter is then arranged for their appointment.