



Press Release

18 August 2009

MPHDS 26

Enjoy a Smokefree Ramadan!

NHS Manchester's Stop Smoking Service is offering support for people who want to quit smoking or using tobacco products and enjoy a Smokefree Ramadan, which starts on Saturday 22 August 2009.

During the 30 days of Ramadan, Aurangzaib Amirat, a specialist stop smoking advisor, will be visiting the following Mosques to provide one-to-one support for anyone ready to quit:

- **Dar-us-Salam Mosque**, 47 Slade Lane, Longsight M13 0QJ
- **Victoria Park Mosque**, 20 Upper Park Road, Victoria Park, M14 5RU
- **Al Quba & Shah Poran Mosque**, 109-115 Beresford Road, Longsight, M13 0TA
- **Makki Mosque**, 125 Beresford Rd, Longsight, M13 0TA
- **Madina Mosque**, 2 Barlow Road, Levenshulme, M19 3DJ
- **Al Furqan Mosque**, 42 Great Southern Street, Rusholme, M14 4EZ

For dates and times of each visit, or for help and advice to stop smoking or chewing tobacco call Manchester Stop Smoking Service on 0161 205 5998.

Quitting smoking or using tobacco products isn't always easy, but support from an NHS specialist advisor can help make the fresh start to a smokefree life. Bashir Ahmed is one of many people who received support from an advisor who visited a Mosque in Manchester during Ramadan 2008.

After smoking for over 25 years, Bashir has gone smokefree. He had tried to quit during Ramadan when he received information from Aurangzaib, but was not quite ready. Instead he kicked the habit when he was admitted into hospital last December. Bashir said: "I was not allowed to smoke for 3 days while I was in hospital. On the fourth day I thought; if I managed not to smoke for 3 days then maybe I'll try 4 days, then I tried 5 days and I've not smoked since.

"I used to smoke a lot of cigarettes when I broke my fast each day, so I would not have any cravings while I was fasting. But now my whole life has changed since I've quit – my chest is

clearer, I can concentrate and I don't get terrible headaches. I am really looking forward to a smokefree Ramandan this year.

"I want to help people realise that smoking is bad for their health. Ramadan is a really good time to take advantage of the support offered to stop smoking."

Smoking tobacco is a cause of many diseases, including cancers, heart disease, respiratory diseases e.g. emphysema. Smokeless tobacco is a cause of cancer of the mouth, lips, tongue etc. Betel nut is also associated with serious pre-cancerous condition – oral sub-mucosa fibrosis. When tobacco is chewed by pregnant women it can reduce the growth of their unborn babies.

People from Parkistani, Bangladeshi and Indian Backgrounds have around a 50% higher risk of heart disease that the UK population as a whole. A smoker's risk of heart disease will be higher.¹

Stopping smoking will reduce the risk of developing illness, disability or death by cancer, heart or lung disease. It will help protect the health of those around you by not exposing them to secondhand smoke. Children are more likely to be healthy and not suffer from asthma or glue ear. Quit for good and enjoy the benefits of general health and fitness.

People who are not ready to stop smoking at this time can step outside to smoke to protect children from second-hand smoke. Why not join Manchester's Smokefree Homes Scheme and be included into a free prize draw to win £250 of home vouchers.

Abbie Paton, Manchester Stop Smoking Service Tobacco Lead said, "Ramadan provides an opportunity to receive support to stop smoking and enjoy a healthy smokefree Ramadan."

Ends

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

Notes to editors

- ¹ British Heart Foundation
- Numbers of people from South Asian Communities seen during Ramadan 2008:

Clients by ethnicity 1 September 2008 – 30 September 2008		
Ethnicity	Clients seen	Quit at 4 weeks
Indian	5	1
Pakistani	39	17
Bangladeshi	17	11

Other Asian	7	3
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3. Manchester Stop Smoking Service is part of Manchester Community Health which is the provider arm of NHS Manchester.
4. 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.
5. For support to go smokefree call Manchester Stop Smoking Service on 0161 205 5998 or text QUIT with your name and postcode to 81066.