

One third of smokers in Northern Ireland have lost count of quit attempts

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The '30 No Smoking Days Later' report highlights the glory years of declining smoking rates but pinpoints the plight of the 'final fifth', many of whom will have been addicted to tobacco for years.

The report also reveals that on average local smokers have made almost six failed attempts to quit.

Cancer Focus Northern Ireland along with British Heart Foundation (BHF) Northern Ireland and the Public Health Agency (PHA), who are part of the local No Smoking Day Coordinating Committee*, are urging smokers to stub out their cigarettes in an attempt to kick their habit for good.

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4 minutes



No Smoking Day welcomes all quitters and re-quitters

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Stephanie Leckey, Area Development Manager BHF Northern Ireland, said: "Around 360,000 people aged 16 and over smoke in Northern Ireland and sadly one in every two will die earlier because of their smoking habit."

Gerry McElwee, Head of Cancer Prevention at Cancer Focus, said: “No Smoking Day is one of the best times for smokers to escape their addiction so we are encouraging them to make today the start of their smoke-free lives.

“It’s difficult for smokers to quit on their own. Cancer Focus understands this and offers services to support people who want to give up. These include a Smokers’ Helpline on 0808 812 8008 (funded by PHA), and stop smoking sessions in local workplaces and community settings, with Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) and behavioural support.

“We look at overcoming the fear of quitting, coping with cravings, managing stress avoiding weight gain and adjusting to a better lifestyle.”

Gerry Bleakney, Head of Health and Social Wellbeing Improvement, PHA, explained: “As highlighted above quitting smoking can be very difficult, however if you enroll in a specialist stop smoking service as an aid to stop then you quadruple your chances of stopping smoking. An average of 50% of those who enrolled in services last year had successfully stopped at four weeks.

“If you quit and then relapse, accept it, work out why it happened, and focus on how you can avoid it in future. It takes several efforts for many people to quit for good but if you are determined you will do it.

“There are over 600 free stop smoking services across Northern Ireland in pharmacies, GP surgeries, hospitals, communities and workplaces. For information and useful tips to stop smoking, from PHA's [Stop Smoking](#) website and order a ‘Quit Kit’ free of charge. Alternatively contact the Smokers’ Helpline on 0808 812 8008.”

Cancer Focus will be at a number of venues today to offer support and advice to the public including the Kennedy Shopping Centre in Belfast from 10am to 1pm.

For smokers in Northern Ireland who want to get more information and advice call the free NI Smokers’ Helpline on 0808 812 8008, or visit [Stop Smoking](#) website for information on local services.

Notes to the editor

For information on No Smoking Day visit WeQuit.co.uk or Twitter using the hashtag #NoSmokingDay

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