

SMOKING: The difference YOU can make

Why it matters – the effects of smoking

- Smoking is the single biggest cause of preventable death and disease in New Zealand (and worldwide)
- 50% of all smokers die from diseases directly caused by tobacco use
- 5000 New Zealanders die each year from tobacco use or exposure (i.e. secondhand smoke)
- Those who die from smoking, do so 15 years earlier than non-smokers
- Smoking is directly responsible for a quarter of all cancer deaths in New Zealand

How big a problem is it?

- There are approximately 650,000 smokers in New Zealand, that's one in five New Zealanders – over 300,000 of these will die from diseases directly caused by smoking
- The rates are higher again among Maori women (49%) and men (40%), and Pacific women (29%) and men (32%)
- 85% of smokers wish they'd never started and 65% have tried to quit in the last five years

Smokers want to quit, they just don't know how. They are waiting for you to offer help.

The evidence-base for ABC

- The ABC approach was devised to help clinicians remember the key three steps in helping people to quit smoking (*Ask about smoking, give Brief advice to stop, and make an offer of Cessation support*)
- It is generally stated that 1 in every 40 people who smoke that are advised to quit will go on to quit smoking permanently
- Remember that most people who smoke want to quit. In fact, a recent research review found that an estimated 20% of smokers go on to make a quit attempt in the 6 month period following a general practice visit
- This proportion can be increased to 25% by simply advising people to quit smoking. This can be done in less than 30 seconds.
- The amount of people making a quit attempt could be increased even further to 35%, if the brief advice is followed with an offer of support to quit (such as a referral to Quitline or an NRT prescription)

The role you play

Health practitioners are among the most trusted professionals in society. The evidence indicates they are in a unique position to prompt patients to quit smoking.

Don't let tobacco be the elephant in the room, it's too big to ignore. We want to see more people making more quit attempts, more often and with more support.

It's not a box-ticking exercise, it's about patient outcomes – it's about saving lives.

Learn more about helping people to quit through the online e-learning tool at: www.smokingcessationabc.org.nz, or through the [STEPS](#) training programme.

