

Sunderland Specialist Stop Smoking Service



A Children and Young People Vaping and Smoking Prevention Advisor was appointed (and been in post for 10 months). The role is evolving in terms of service provision and establishing what works, but essentially it involves:

1. Supporting anyone who is 12+ to quit smoking through the Sunderland Stop Smoking Service clinic (online or face-to-face), with the provision of behavioural support using NRT (all except mouth spray) and vapes (18+ only).
2. Deliver prevention work in schools, family hubs, youth clubs and anywhere that is needed, but work to date has mostly been in schools. Vaping education is offered in context of smoking (e.g. it is a quit smoking aid, and its primary use is for cessation).

The role involves working in partnership and collaboration with:

- School nurses and headteachers.
- Along with our Lead Stop Smoking Practitioner, Alison Mills (Universal Services), they have delivered training in how to deliver cessation advice to staff at the local youth drug and alcohol service (Youth Drug and Alcohol Project Sunderland (YDAP)) and registered them to use Call it Quits, so they can also provide NRT. Ongoing mentoring support to YDAP staff after training, is also being provided.
- Paediatric Emergency Department of Sunderland Royal Hospital in setting up a referral pathway (still in process).

Prevention work

The prevention activities and resources are delivered in 35–45-minute sessions with all year groups (years 5 to 10 and year 13), using PowerPoint slides (tailored to the specific group) and activities. The activities used depend on the time available, are mapped to the age group and include quizzes and games, videos, and creating mind maps. They also attend events organised for children and young people and have a stand with educational resources on vaping (in the context of smoking cessation and a message of 'if you don't smoke don't vape'). The resources are interactive and attractive for young people, and include activity books, crosswords and spin wheels (Q&A).

Cessation support

On all educational resources, and within prevention activities, are the contact details for Sunderland Stop Smoking Service. Teachers are also informed of the referral pathway if they feel there are young people that need support to stop.

A recent request was received from a headteacher (via the school nurse) to speak to a young person who wanted support to quit. Support will be delivered within the school setting, if the young person consents to this. The structure of support will be based on the individual needs of the young person.

Outcomes

Between 1st April 2024 and 12th February 2025 seven young people have come through the Stop Smoking Service for vaping cessation support (four to quit vaping, three to quit vaping and

smoking). Interest in using NRT patches was low. The preference was for NRT gum, with the majority of the young people using NRT for four to five weeks. There have been difficulties with follow ups and maintaining contact, e.g. in some instances contact has only been via the parents' telephone. Their policy is that after two consecutive failed attempts at contact the case is closed.

Message to other services

“Sunderland Specialist Stop Smoking Service delivers Education and support to Children and Young People (CYP) around vaping and smoking. CYP have a lot of information and are also misinformed around these topics. Providing support and engagement with CYP in form of workshops, education sessions, school assemblies and one-to-one support has proved impactful in raising awareness, understanding nicotine addiction, as well as increasing their knowledge around vaping and smoking. These engagements give them an opportunity to speak with a professional who would explore risk taking behaviours, address misconceptions, explain legal and regulatory information. These service provisions, empower Children and Young People with knowledge to make informed choices that lead to better health outcomes.”

Oberuomo Odili, Children & Young People Vaping & Smoking Prevention Advisor,
Sunderland Specialist Stop Smoking Service.