

Tobacco Alliance FAQ: NHS Organisations

What is Tobacco Control?

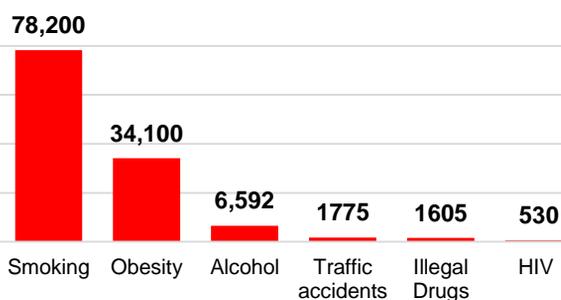
Tobacco control is a co-ordinated, comprehensive approach to reduce smoking prevalence. Alliances are local partnerships within local authority boundaries working together to effectively reduce smoking rates and tackle health inequalities. Alliances typically include a wide range of members, from trading standards and environmental health to fire and rescue, education, health staff, children's services, as well as elected members and local NGOs and businesses.

The impact of smoking on the NHS

- Every year nearly 80,000 people die prematurely from smoking related diseases. Many more live with costly long term illnesses.
- This places a considerable financial burden on the NHS, [costing more than £2 billion a year](#).
- Health interventions are also less successful for smokers than non-smokers:
 - Non-smokers have shorter hospital stays, lower drug doses and fewer complications ([NICE, PH48](#)).
 - Smokers are more likely to die after surgery and to experience wound infection (See [ASH, Smoking & Surgery](#)).

Why is tobacco control important?

Annual deaths (England)



See [ASH Factsheet: Illness & Death](#) for sources

What is the role of the NHS in tackling tobacco?

According to the [NHS Five Year Forward View](#) "the future health of millions of children, the sustainability of the NHS and the economic prosperity of Britain all now depend on a radical upgrade in prevention and public health." The NHS comes into contact with millions of smokers and has a key role to play in engaging organisations and professionals at all levels of the NHS with tobacco control and smoking cessation.

Additionally, whilst smoking rates have declined significantly in recent years, they remain much higher in disadvantaged communities and tobacco is responsible for half the difference in life expectancy between the rich and the poor. The [NHS Constitution for England](#) states that the NHS has a duty to pay "particular attention to groups where improvements in health and life expectancy are not keeping pace with the rest of the population".

The role of the NHS in an alliance

NHS organisations have an important role to play in a local tobacco control alliance by:

- Implementing NICE guidance on smoking ([PH48](#))
- Work with local authorities to ensure all secondary care, acute, maternity and mental health services have an effective Stop Smoking Service
- Support staff to quit smoking
- Using internal communication channels to share public health messages
- Implementing and enforce smokefree grounds



What can NHS organisations gain?

By working in partnership with different organisations the NHS can contribute to an increased rate of smoking decline. This will not only fulfill obligations to reduce health inequalities but will contribute to immediate and long term savings.

