

Smoke-free prisons: Co-producing a service specification supporting people in our care

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Introduction

Creating a smoke-free prison service is an important step towards achieving both the aim of a smoking prevalence of less than 5% and reducing health inequalities, since approximately 75% of the prison population are smokers. The policy also addresses exposure to second-hand smoke, which posed a serious health risk to staff and those in custody.

Scotland's prisons became smoke free on 30 November 2018, following the prohibition of tobacco. To support the transition to, and maintenance of, the smoke-free environment a service specification was developed to define minimum requirements for interventions and pharmacotherapy.

Methodology

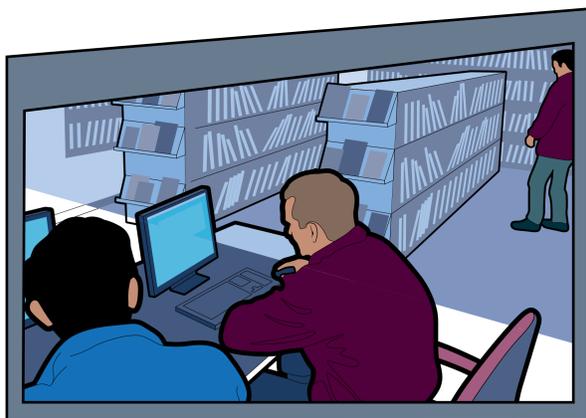
Stakeholders (NHS, Scottish Prison Service (SPS), the third sector and academia) working to improve the health of people in prison collaborated from January 2018 to agree and produce the specification for a smoke-free pathway in prisons.

Following a series of meetings, workshops and an extensive consultation exercise, a specification and associated standard operating procedures were agreed. Information for the individuals in the care of the NHS and the prison service ('iQuit: coping without tobacco') was also designed, pre-tested and issued to all on admission, to communicate the service 'offer'.

Aims and objectives

The aim was to develop a pathway covering the interfaces experienced by people in prison. The specification, including the pathway, needed to:

- support individuals in a smoke-free environment, through collaborative working between the NHS, SPS, and the third sector
- facilitate consistency in delivery of services across 15 prisons located in nine NHS Board areas, which is equitable with community provision
- provide timely access to support, seamlessly transferred to the community
- communicate a clear, jargon-free model to manage expectations of individuals in our care and all stakeholders
- provide a holistic, person-centred model of care, connecting smoking dependency with support for other addictions or health behaviour change interventions



- be evidence based, from peer-reviewed research (for example, the Tobacco in prisons (TIPs) study) and from the learning from Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service, NHS England and Public Health England.

Results and outcomes

The project team demonstrated how effective partnership working and communication strategies are essential to deliver transformational change in a short timeframe, across multiple agencies, for a person-centred service. There have been four immediate outcomes:

- No major incidents or unrest occurred since implementation of the ban.
- Second-hand smoke levels significantly reduced before and after 30 November 2018.
- Referrals to specialist smoking cessation services increased before and after the specification was published.
- Involvement of prison healthcare staff in managing nicotine addiction increased.

The SPS and NHS have agreed an ongoing commitment to monitor and sustain the work within a new health improvement strategy for the prison setting.

References

NHS Health Scotland (2018). Smoke-free prisons pathway: a service specification supporting people in our care. URL: www.healthscotland.scot/media/2276/smoke-free-prisons-pathway-a-service-specification-supporting-people-in-our-care.pdf

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