



Cardiff Institute of Society and Health
Athrofa y Gymdeithas ac Iechyd Caerdydd

Consultancy for 'Fresh Start'

CISHE contributors

Dr Jo Holliday (Research Associate)
Professor Laurence Moore (Director of CISHE)

Fresh Start team

Paul Stratton, Health Improvement Principal - Tobacco Control (Leicestershire County and Rutland PCT)
Heather Burton, Healthier Communities Coordinator - Tobacco Control (Leicestershire County and Rutland PCT)
Jean Wagstaff, Leicestershire County Council (Trading Standards Service)

Start date: November 2006

End date: March 2009

Funding: Holliday J, Moore L, Consultancy for 'Fresh Start'. Leicestershire County and Rutland PCT.

The Study

Smoking has been identified as a leading cause of preventable illness and premature death in the UK. The current national adult smoking prevalence is 26%. The prevalence of smoking is strongly linked to health inequality with smoking, prevalence and smoking related mortality being greatest in disadvantaged areas and amongst those with lower incomes. The new national health inequality targets are to reduce smoking rates among manual groups from 32% in 1998 to 26% by 2010 to narrow the gap between manual and non-manual groups.

The decline in smoking seen in adults is not matched by trends observed in young people. Rates amongst young people have changed little over the past decade and the most recent national survey found that approximately 25 per cent of 15 year-old young women and 16 per cent of 15 year-old young men were regular smokers. The government strategy for reducing smoking includes a target to reduce smoking rates amongst children from 13% in 1996 to 9% in 2010. Although the risks to health of smoking are often difficult for young people to appreciate the desire to stop smoking is still strong. A survey on attitudes to smoking found that about 70 -75 per cent of young people who smoke want to quit smoking. This is comparable with the rate for adults. However, NHS smoking cessation services have focussed on adult smokers.

Restricting the illegal supply of tobacco products (under age sales) and limiting exposure to tobacco products (smoke free homes) may also contribute to reducing the prevalence of smoking amongst young people.

The Fresh Start Programme

This unique programme which has been approved and funded by Central Government and supervised by the Government Office for East Midlands is coordinated and run by Leicestershire County and Rutland PCT in collaboration with Leicestershire County Council under a Local Area Agreement (LAA). It covers smoking prevention and cessation in deprived communities of the County and is both inventive and measurable. It is a community project, which targets selected schools situated in deprived areas and uses partner agencies to help reduce smoking prevalence within the schools and its catchment area. Six Target schools and 4 comparison schools have been selected based on the deprived areas within the schools

catchment area. The target audience for the young people involved in this project are years 10 and 11.

The 3 year project will make a real difference in reducing the prevalence of smoking in young people. The 3 year target is to achieve a 20% reduction in the number of 14 to 16 year olds who smoke as well as increasing by 30% the number of adults within selected deprived communities who access an NHS stop smoking service and a 30% increase in the number who remain smoke free at 4 weeks. The measurement of the smoking rates amongst the young people will be through the use of a comprehensive questionnaire implemented every year of the project.

To date, CISHE has been involved in assisting with project design and methodology, the development of the outcome questionnaire, the preparation of survey documentation, and data analysis.

Contact

Dr Jo Holliday - HollidayJ1@cardiff.ac.uk