



Local Strategic Framework on Nicotine Vaping for local public health teams April 2024

Aim: to provide local public health teams with a range of recommended actions to help them and their partners to take a strategic approach to vaping within the shared vision of the [North East declaration for a smokefree future](#), so that:

- tobacco is understood as the most lethal consumer product
- nicotine vaping is understood as posing a small fraction of the risks of smoking tobacco though vapes are not risk-free
- people who smoke are supported to quit and have the facts about quitting options including the use of vapes
- young people and non-smokers are discouraged from using nicotine in any form
- the availability of non-compliant products and the frequency of underage sales are reduced.

This aim has been identified in the context of the opportunities provided through the Swap to Stop scheme and in light of the ADPHNE position statements on [nicotine vaping](#) and supporting smokers to quit.

Objectives: summary

1. Support evidence-based approaches to vaping as part of the wider system that helps smokers to quit
2. Develop and maintain strategic partnerships
3. Deliver effective evidence-based communications
4. Support compliance, receive intelligence and deliver enforcement
5. Advocate for effective regulation
6. Actively take steps to protect the environment
7. Collect, monitor and respond to data

Objective 1: Support evidence-based approaches to vaping as part of the wider system that helps smokers to quit

- Ensure there's a broad knowledge of the key findings from the latest [OHID independent evidence review](#) on nicotine vaping. The lead author, Professor Ann McNeill, talks through the key findings in [this presentation](#) from the Leadership for a Smokefree Future conference in the North East in 2023.
- Ensure colleagues understand the role of e-cigarettes in smoking cessation – Cochrane is running a [living systematic review](#) and there is 'high certainty evidence' of the effectiveness of vapes in supporting smokers to quit. [NICE guidance](#) recommends that nicotine-containing vapes are accessible to adults who smoke.
- Raise awareness that vaping can also reduce harms from exposure to secondhand tobacco smoke: the [OHID independent evidence review](#) found no significant increase of toxicant biomarkers after short-term secondhand exposure to vaping among people who do not smoke or vape
- Encourage partners to undertake evidence-based training e.g. [National Centre for Smoking Cessation and Training](#) vaping module for health and social care professionals.
- Promote with webinars and learning opportunities on vaping and ensure learning is shared e.g. the CRUK [UK E-Cigarette Research Forum](#).
- Make use of the 'vaping hub' on the Fresh [Knowledge Hub group](#) with access to range of evidence based tools, resources and guidance. Public health colleagues in the North East are encouraged to join this closed group and invite other local partners too.

Objective 2: Develop and maintain strategic partnerships

- Use the [ADPHNE position statement](#) on nicotine vaping to engage with colleagues and outline the local approach
- Hold a themed discussion on vaping at a local tobacco control alliance meeting so that all members have access to the evidence base. Fresh has a guide on how to run these meetings and can support.
- Engage partners in the Swap to Stop programme delivery and ensure this is linked into local tobacco alliance delivery
- Ensure local alliances are aware of the NENC ICB Smokefree NHS/Treating Tobacco Dependency Taskforce priorities and opportunities for collaboration and influence. The Taskforce has a specific [position statement](#) on nicotine vaping.
- Ensure local authority representation on NHS Trust tobacco meetings and vice versa i.e. that NHS tobacco leads are represented on local alliance meetings.
- Maintain relationships with a range of key partners where vaping is an important topic, especially clinicians and other health and social care professionals, children and young people's services, the Trading Standards service, waste management colleagues, the third sector and others.

Objective 3: Deliver effective evidence-based communications

- Disseminate the Fresh/ADPHNE vaping communications guide to teams likely to communicate on vaping including external partners like the NHS and the police.
- Weave evidence-based messages on vaping into local quitting communications and link to the Fresh quitting website www.freshquit.co.uk in resources – this has a dedicated section on vaping. The Better Health website also a specific section on [vaping to quit smoking](#).
- Work with the Smokefree NHS/Treating Tobacco Dependency Taskforce to support frontline staff in health and social care to access the evidence base and deliver messages consistent with the ADPHNE position statements and the nicotine vaping communications guide. The Taskforce have a leaflet that can be helpful in clinical settings.
- Be active on social media to promote the evidence base including linking to the ADPHNE and the Taskforce position statements.
- Seek opportunities to contribute to staff newsletters and other communications to include an update on vaping and the evidence base – Fresh can support with this.
- Proactively correct misperceptions that have been presented in the media, in meetings or elsewhere – the [ASH myth buster](#) can help with this.
- Where locally appropriate, make use of the [ADPHNE/Fresh evidence-based schools resources on vaping](#) (originally developed by Smokefree Sheffield and ASH).
- Where locally appropriate, promote the availability of Swap to Stop schemes in local stop smoking services and other settings. Celebrate any successes that might influence decision making in other settings.

Objective 4: Support compliance, receive intelligence and deliver enforcement

- Ensure Trading Standards services are linked into the local tobacco control alliance, are kept updated on its priorities and are invited to provide updates on activity
- Support Trading Standards in taking a strategic and intelligence-led approach to enforcement – Trading Standards North West have developed the following approach which has been adapted here to include some recommended actions for Trading Standards colleagues:
 - Understand the market, scoping out in particular where there are challenges with illegal sales
 - Educate retailers and ensure they comply with requirements relating to illegal/non-compliant tobacco and related products along with age-restrictions in

respect of such products. Also support/signpost retailers to enforcement partners to encourage compliance with waste electrical regulations and related take-back schemes. Use the opportunity to talk to retailers about both vapes and tobacco.

- Enforce in a targeted way, collaborating with other enforcement colleagues e.g. local police and taking action as appropriate e.g. requesting alcohol licence reviews for shops found to be selling to children
- Communicate with the public to lessen concern and protect the market, using the communications guide to frame message accurately and liaising with the local Director of Public Health
- Dispose of seized product with the least impact on the environment
- Protect work at all times from the tobacco industry, in compliance with [WHO FCTC Article 5.3](#).

Objective 5: Advocate for effective regulation

- Continue to raise awareness that tobacco is still the biggest killer and avoidable cause of health inequalities. There is still much to do to regulate the tobacco industry and its products.
- Discuss locally and endorse where possible the [North East Declaration for a Smokefree Future](#).
- Keep abreast of developments with the Tobacco and Vapes Bill which contains powers to regulate vapes and engage with advocacy opportunities – Fresh will provide updates as needed.
- Explore measures that can be implemented locally to reduce the appeal of vapes to young people while still ensuring access by adult smokers who want to quit e.g. discussing with retailers opportunities to limit displays in shops

Objective 6: Actively take steps to protect the environment

- Engage with waste management colleagues locally to support an approach that promotes the recycling of vaping products while still encouraging adult smokers to switch.
- Keep up to date with changing regulations e.g. the Government has committed to banning the sale and supply of single use vapes by 1st April 2025
- Avoid using the term 'disposable' wherever possible as this gives the impression that vapes can be discarded – 'single use' may be a better term.
- Where possible, support businesses to comply with their environmental obligations on waste management including take-back schemes. Retailer guidance can be found [here](#).
- Raise awareness among local partners that cigarette butts are the most littered item and cause significant harm to the environment including waterways and wildlife.

Objective 7: Collect, monitor and respond to data

- Track key data sources relating to vaping e.g. ASH surveys on [adult](#) and [youth](#) prevalence (published annually, results normally available in spring/summer) and the [Smoking, Drinking and Drug Use survey](#) from NHS Digital (usually every two years; last published September 2022).
- If your local authority commissions a health-related behaviour survey in schools, review the questions on smoking and vaping. Fresh and ASH can support this process so that the questions asked are consistent with other surveys.
- Monitor the roll out of Swap to Stop schemes if they are being implemented in your local authority area. Collate and reflect on any insight and data from clinical settings on the use of vapes including any involvement of Trusts or primary care partners in Swap to Stop schemes.
- Use local data to ensure that key stakeholders are kept informed and also use it to advocate for effective policy development.