**SERVICE SPECIFICATION**

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| **Service Specification No.** | N/A |
| **Service** | Stop Smoking Services in Community Pharmacies (aka The Intermediate Service) |
| **Commissioner Lead** | Jayne Hardman |
| **Provider Lead** | Various |
| **Period** | 01.04.24 – 31.03.26 plus one |
| **Date of Review** | January 2026 |

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| **1. Population Needs** |
| **1.1 National context**  Smoking remains the single largest cause of preventable illness and premature death in the UK despite efforts to denormalise smoking nationally which has contributed to significant reductions in the proportion of the population who smoke.  Smoking prevalence is higher amongst routine and manual workers than for those in professional and managerial socio-economic groups and people on low incomes have a significantly higher smoking rate. There is also evidence to suggest that people in lower socio-economic groups are likely to find it more difficult to quit without support.  Community pharmacies have a key role to play in providing brief interventions for smoking cessation. Evidence suggests that, given appropriate training, community pharmacists delivering smoking cessation support can have similar success rates to that of nurses. There is also some evidence that involving community pharmacy support staff in brief interventions around smoking can increase the provision and the recording of smoking status in patient’s medications records.  **1.2 Local context**  According to 2021 Annual Population Survey, the adult smoking rate in Halton was 13.2%, a reduction since 2011 when the percentage was estimated to be 22.9%. This is similar to the England average of 13%, with the worst rate in England being 22% and the best being 6.6%.  There have been reductions in smoking levels locally, and these figures show that Halton percentage is now similar to the England average. |
| **2. Outcomes** |
| The service will make a significant contribution to the following objectives within the Public Health Outcomes Framework.   * People are helped to live healthy lifestyles, make healthy choices and reduce health inequalities; * Reduced numbers of people living with preventable ill health and people dying prematurely, while reducing the gap between communities. |
| **3. Overview** |
| **3.1 Scope**  This contract relates to the service for providing one to one support and advice for clients who wish to stop smoking and facilitating access to appropriate smoking cessation products.  The support will take the form of one to one private consultations with the client. It is recommended that for the first 4 weeks of a quit attempt the pharmacy advisor should see a client weekly to offer behavioural support and review the quantity of NRT supplied to ensure optimum management of client’s cravings and withdrawal symptoms.  Community pharmacies (herein known as service providers) who wish to provide this service must also provide the NRT Voucher scheme for which there is a separate specification.  **3.2 Aims and objectives of service**  The service aims to provide enhanced access for patients seeking help to stop smoking via the existing network of community pharmacies.  The objectives of the service are:   * To improve access to and choice of Stop Smoking services. * To assist in the delivery of local smoking cessation targets. * To reduce smoking related illnesses and deaths by helping people to give up smoking. * To improve the health of the population by reducing passive exposure to smoke.   **3.3 Population covered**  Clients fulfilling the criteria set out in the Halton Stop Smoking Service protocol which can be found on PharmOutcomes.  The service is only available for people aged 16 or over. Clients under this age should be referred to the Halton Stop Smoking Service.  **3.4 Any acceptance and exclusion criteria and thresholds**  This service will provide one to one support and advice to people who want to give up smoking and will facilitate access to and where appropriate supply advice and appropriate smoking cessation products with supporting information materials.  An appropriately trained smoking cessation specialist will be responsible for offering and providing, with the client’s consent, support, choice of product and follow-up according to the local treatment protocol and National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidance. The smoking cessation specialist will be responsible for ensuring that details of consultations and advice provided to each client referred to the service is recorded.  Based on the pharmacy stop smoking advisor consultation and in accordance with the NRT protocols and guidance, the pharmacy will supply appropriate smoking cessation pharmacotherapy, e.g., NRT  The service does not currently include for the provision of electronic cigarettes.  **3.5 Interdependencies with other services**  This service will be supported by the Halton Stop Smoking Service who will conduct an initial visit to the service provider to provide information regarding the local service and supply and provide training in the use and calibration of necessary equipment. Thereafter the Stop Smoking service will provide ongoing support as necessary.  **3.6 Any activity planning assumptions**  This service will work in conjunction with the “Stop Smoking Service Protocol”.  The service provider will have in place robust systems for the identification, mitigation and management of clinical and non-clinical risk. |
| **4. Service Description** |
| * The service provider will provide one to one support and advice to the client as part of a series of weekly or fortnightly consultations for at least a four week period; * Initial consultations should:   + Provide information on the consequences of smoking, the benefits of smoking cessation and the main features of tobacco withdrawal syndrome;   + Assess smoking habits and behaviours of each client and apply diagnostic criteria;   + Assess current readiness and ability to quit including past history of quit attempts;   + Support clients to identify smoking and relapse triggers;   + Measure Carbon Monoxide (CO) levels using a CO monitor;   + Describe techniques to cope with urges to smoke;   + Support clients to identify personal goals and develop action plans including setting a target quit date;   + Offer appropriate written materials;   + Agree a chosen treatment pathway in accordance with the Stop Smoking Protocol, client choice and approval of duty pharmacist;   + Agree frequency and dates of follow up consultations. * Generally, NRT supplies should be a maximum of 2 weeks. During the 12-week treatment period, NRT supplies may only be given for 4 weeks to a client on some occasions, e.g., it could be offered if the client is going away on holiday or to fit in with shift patterns. This would be at the discretion of the advisor. * Follow up consultations should include a smoking status validation using a CO test and be used as an opportunity for additional counselling and support. * Clients who continue to give high CO readings (over 5ppm) for more than two weeks should not be issued with further products and should be referred to the Halton Stop Smoking service. * Clients who do not attend follow up consultations should be contacted by telephone to determine if they wish to continue with the service and to ascertain and record self-reported smoking status. A minimum of three attempts should be made to contact any patients that do not attend follow up consultations. * The service provider must be able to provide a sufficient level of privacy and safety for the provision of this service. * The service provider has a duty to ensure that the pharmacists and staff involved in the provision of this service have the relevant knowledge and skills and are appropriately trained in the provision of this service. * The service provider has a duty to ensure that pharmacists and staff involved in the provision of this service are aware of and act in accordance with local protocols and national guidance. * The service provider must inform the Stop Smoking Service of any changes to staff involved in the provision of the service so that any new staff can be appropriately trained. * The smoking advisor should confirm the eligibility of the person to access the service in accordance with the protocol. A person cannot register for the pharmacy based service if they are already registered with the Halton Stop Smoking Service. * The smoking advisor should identify treatment options that have proven effectiveness and maximise commitment to the target quit date ensuring the client understands the ongoing support and monitoring arrangements and is provided with appropriate information and advice. * The service provider should maintain appropriate records to ensure effective ongoing service delivery and audit. * Stop Smoking products provided as a result of this service must be supplied in accordance with the Stop Smoking Protocol and relevant specification. * A further supply of treatment can be made at follow up consultations within the timescales indicated within the protocol. * The service provider is responsible for recording the four week follow up for each client. The Halton Stop Smoking service will assist with the record management of these clients using the intermediate service by recording details on the Stop Smoking database. The pharmacy should include the client’s smoking status, wherever possible, self-reported quits should be confirmed by a carbon monoxide reading. A successful quitter is as defined by the Department of Health Stop Smoking Guidelines. * Monitoring status must be fully completed to include the four week follow-up before being returned to Halton Borough Council for payment. These figures will then be included in the monitoring returns sent to the Department of Health each quarter. * It is the service provider’s responsibility to ensure that claim are submitted in a timely fashion. It is particularly important that all claims relating to activity within a particular year are submitted no later than one month after the end of that year since funding levels for subsequent years cannot be guaranteed. The Council has the right to refuse payment in the event of late claims. * If a payment is declined the service provider may appeal in writing to the Council giving full details of the exceptional circumstances under which a claim was not able to be submitted within the given timescale. * The Council will acknowledge receipt of an appeal in writing within 14 days of receipt and notify the service provider of their decision no later than six weeks after the appeal was received. |
| **6. Obligations** |
| **6.1 Responsibilities of the service provider**   * The service provider must ensure that supporting equipment such as carbon monoxide monitors are recalibrated between 12 and 24 months. * The service provider must issue and dispense products in accordance with timescales described in the protocol and in accordance with relevant specifications. * Pharmacy staff responsible for the service must participate in on-going training (as outlined in section 7. Training and Competency). * The service provider will have appropriate Stop Smoking information available for clients and promote and encourage uptake of the service. This will be provided by the Halton Stop Smoking Service. * The service provider will review its standard operating procedures (SOPs) and referral pathways for the service every two years. * It is the responsibility of the service provider to ensure that staff providing this service are appropriately trained to deliver the service and have satisfactorily completed National Centre for Smoking Cessation and Training (NCSCT). * The service provider will co-operate with any locally agreed audits and assessments of service user experience. * The service provider must not re-direct a client already registered with the Halton Stop Smoking Service to the intermediate service the pharmacy provides. This is to ensure that the client’s details are not duplicated in the audit system.   **6.1.1 Professional responsibility**  Service specifications do not remove inherent professional obligations or accountability. All pharmacists and registered technicians involved in providing this service must adhere to their professional code of conduct and at no point does this service abrogate their professional responsibility, professional judgement must be used at all times.  It is the professional’s responsibility to practice only within the bounds of their own competence.  The responsible pharmacist on each given day has overall responsibility for ensuring the service is delivered in accordance with this service specification.  **6.1.2 Standard Operating Procedures**  The service provider will develop a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) which specifically details the operational delivery of this service.  The service provider must ensure that all staff including those other than pharmacists, involved in the provision of the service, have relevant knowledge, are appropriately trained and operate within the SOP; this includes sensitive client centred communication skills.  The SOP will be reviewed at least every two years or before if circumstances dictate. Each review should be documented and the SOP/protocol subject to version control. Staff delivering the service must be trained in the SOP and a training record held by the provider.  Changes to procedure must be highlighted within the SOP for special attention.  The service provider must ensure that there are systems in place to make locum pharmacists aware of the enhanced service.  Halton Borough Council will disseminate information about the service to other pharmacy contractors and health care professionals in order that they are aware of what is reasonable to expect from the service and are able to signpost to the service.  **6.2 Responsibilities of Halton Borough Council (HBC) and the Stop Smoking Service**  All materials required including equipment, documentation and smoking cessation leaflets will be supplied free of charge to the pharmacy by the Stop Smoking service.  HBC will reimburse the pharmacy for:   * Where applicable, the total cost of NRT including VAT (less applicable prescription charges) and a dispensing fee for each voucher processed; and * An agreed payment for providing the Intermediate Smoking Cessation service upon submission of the four week follow up monitoring form. * HBC will provide a framework for recording relevant service information for the purposes of audit and claiming payment. * HBC, with the Stop Smoking service will be responsible for the promotion of the service locally including the development of publicity materials. * HBC, with the Stop Smoking service will provide details of allied services which pharmacy staff can use to signpost clients who require further assistance. * HBC will periodically review the service. * HBC reserve the right to vary this contract if circumstances change. This will be mutually agreed with the service provider in advance.   **6.3 Service provision and continuity**  It is the responsibility of the service provider to have a process in place which ensures that all new staff and locums are aware of all enhanced services provided by the pharmacy and commissioned by Halton BC and must maintain continuity of service during and after staff changes. |
| **7. Training and Competency** |
| All pharmacy staff providing stop smoking advisor consultations must be trained to offer brief advice or brief intervention as detailed below:  Advisors are required to complete the NCSCT combined online level 1 (brief intervention) and level 2 (intermediate) training and assessment programme. |
| **8. Welfare** |
| Where there are concerns about the welfare of any person aged 0 to 18 within the pharmacy setting and/or accessing the service appropriate immediate action must be taken to address those concerns by following the Safeguarding pathway.  Additional information on Child Safeguarding procedures can be found at:  <https://hcypsp.haltonsafeguarding.co.uk/>  <https://hcypsp.haltonsafeguarding.co.uk/procedures-guidance/>  If there are concerns about the welfare of someone over the age of 18 pharmacists are required to contact Halton Borough Council on 0303 333 4300 (this will be picked up by the Emergency Duty Team if outside of normal office hours) or if there is an immediate threat to safety or wellbeing the pharmacist should contact the Police. |
| **9. Significant Event Reporting** |
| The service provider must have an adverse incident and near miss reporting system in place which includes maintaining a log of patient safety incidents.  In the case of an adverse incident involving a client who has been supplied with NRT the client's GP must be informed.  The service provider should be able to demonstrate that it has learnt from an event.  Halton Borough Council reserves the right to undertake its own root cause analysis if it feels that the root cause is derived from the implementation of the service specification, protocol or PGD.    Patient or staff safety incidents or near miss incidents related to this service must be reported to public.health@halton.gov.uk. |
| **10. Complaints** |
| The service provider must have a complaints procedure that complies with Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service complaints (England) Regulations 2009.  The service provider should inform clients connected to this service of their right to complain to Halton Borough Council. Information shall be provided to the client in order for them to access the Council’s complaints procedure.  Complaints directly linked to this service must be reported to Halton Borough Council. Any complaints must be sent to public.health@halton.gov.uk. The Council reserves the right to directly investigate complaints about the service. In such cases the pharmacy will co-operate with the investigating officer giving full access to all relevant documents, files and information and will allow them to interview any personal in the pharmacy’s employment or agent in order to carry out their investigation effectively. |
| **11. Equality and Diversity** |
| The service provider must comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, and will not treat one group of people less favourably than others because of their Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Religion and Belief, Sex and/or Sexual Orientation.  It is the responsibility of the service provider to make reasonable adjustments to meet the individual needs of their patients. |
| **12. Health and Safety** |
| The service provider shall comply with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the management of health and safety at work regulations 1999 and any other acts, regulation, orders or rules of law pertaining to health and safety. |
| **13. Freedom of Information** |
| The commissioner and the commissioned service provider recognize that this service specification and/or associated recorded information may be subject to Freedom of Information Requests (FOI). Each party shall comply with any such Freedom of Information requests received, in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 legal obligations. |
| **14. Required Insurances** |
| * Employers Liability - £10m minimum * Public Liability - £5m minimum * Professional Indemnity - £5m minimum |
| **15. Data Requirements and Record Keeping** |
| The provider will be responsible for maintaining records for the period of time required by data protection legislation.  Personal data must be protected in accordance with the provisions and principles of the Data Protection Act 2018.  The service provider must keep all records for a minimum period of 8 years. If the person is aged up to 16 records are required to be kept until their 25th birthday or eight years after death in line with NHS health records retention policies.  Records for clients who are pregnant or breastfeeding must be kept for 25 years.  Electronic records must also be kept and available for this period.  Records will be kept by the service provider in a secure and confidential manner. Records must be destroyed in a confidential manner.  The consultation should be recorded in the client’s pharmacy PMR record.  Records maintained in association with this service must be made available to Halton BC on request for audit and verification purposes. |
| **16. Performance Monitoring** |
| The service provider will have an NHS dispensing contract with NHS England and must fully comply with the National Pharmacy Contract regulations for delivery of Essential Services.  Halton Borough Council retains the right to audit any part of the service provided by the service provider or the accredited pharmacist at any time to ensure continued quality. Halton Borough Council will ensure the service provider is advised of this prior to taking place.  Halton Borough Council reserves the right to ask for evidence from the service provider that it is following the procedures outlined in this specification.  The service provider will co-operate with any Halton Borough Council led assessment of service user experience or audit of the service in order to evaluate service provision and identify areas for service improvement.  Halton Borough Council reserves the right to evaluate other health professionals’ perception of the overall quality of the service.    Changes to the level or quality of the service will not be introduced without prior agreement with Halton Borough Council. Changes will be authorised in writing. This will be mutually agreed in advance with the service provider. |
| **17. Fees for Providing the Service** |
| **17.1 Fees**  A fee will be made for each client signed up to the Intermediate Service  Each pharmacy contracted to provide this service will receive:     * £15 initial consultation fee * £10 Four week status review completed * £10 C/O validated four week quit recorded     Failure by the Pharmacy to comply with the terms of this Agreement may result in the payment being withdrawn and/or the Council being entitled to repayment.    Halton Borough Council shall be entitled to suspend payment and/or vary the amount of the payment if it considers the Pharmacy has committed a serious breach of the Agreement and shall forthwith notify the Pharmacy in writing accordingly.    The service and payment may be varied or discontinued if a change in Halton Borough Council service priorities is required either by changes in legislation or by other circumstances.  **17.1.2 Payment arrangements**  In all cases payment will be made monthly in arrears from the data you will have entered on PharmOutcomes, PharmOutcomes is an online reporting mechanism.. All claims are subject to the validation of data input and authorization from a certifying officer.  **17.1.3 Terms of payment**  The only sums payable to the Provider for the provision of the Services shall be the Contract Price. All other costs, charges, fees and expenses of whatever kind arising out of or in connection with the Agreement shall be the responsibility of the Provider. |