

Smoke Free WA Health System Policy

Guidelines for the provision of assistance to nicotine dependent staff

WA Health is a smoke free environment.

These guidelines provide information to support WA Health staff to quit smoking and are based on best practice for smoking cessation and nicotine withdrawal management. Additional information can be accessed at the Tobacco Control Supersite: <http://tobacco.health.usyd.edu.au>

Support for staff

Smoking by staff members is not permitted on any WA Health premises whatsoever, therefore smoking is only allowed during designated breaks, outside of WA Health grounds. Breach of this policy will be dealt with in accordance with the WA Health misconduct and discipline policy (and local guidelines where applicable).

Health services provide a level of support that is determined by the circumstances of the health service and its pharmacy. Generally, your health service will provide staff who smoke with a single course of Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT). At the discretion of each health service further NRT support may also be available. In addition, points of referral for ongoing cessation support will be given to those accessing NRT treatment.

1. Nicotine Replacement Therapy

NRT is available in the form of patches, lozenges, gum or inhaler and will be provided to staff, and dispensed through WA Health pharmacies where possible.

When administering NRT products, the [Fagerstrom Test for Nicotine Dependence](#) will be used to determine level of dependence. This is performed by designated WA Health staff prior to dispensing NRT. Contraindications for NRT use should also be noted at this time.

2. NRT Patches

A full course of NRT patches is usually 12 weeks, although 8 weeks of patch therapy is as effective as longer courses.

There are a number of options available for providing NRT patches, these include, but are not limited to:

- **4 and 4**
Four weeks supply of patches, twice in 8 weeks
- **2,2,2 and 2**
Two weeks supply of patches, 4 times over 8 weeks

The best results for NRT patch therapy are achieved when combined with additional support such as counselling and follow up.

3. Other forms of NRT

NRT such as gum, lozenges and inhaler are used as a more rapid acting product, and often as an intermittent therapy particularly for those with a moderate to low dependence.

4. Combination Therapy

This method provides additional support especially for those who may need a higher dose of therapy. Combination therapy is the provision of more rapid acting products such as gum, lozenge or inhaler in combination with the patch. It is suited for more highly dependent smokers.

5. Precautions

It is necessary to note precautions for NRT use for those with cardiovascular disease and for pregnant and lactating women. NRT can be considered during pregnancy if the mother has tried to quit without success and the benefits of quitting outweigh the risk of pharmacotherapy and continued smoking.

6. Points of referral

To improve the likelihood of a successful quit attempt and for ongoing support, **all smokers** will be referred to:

- Quitline telephone counselling – 13 7848, 13 QUIT;
- Health service staff trained in brief intervention
- Local/regional Cancer Council WA Fresh Start facilitator
- www.quitnow.info.au for online cessation
- General Practitioner
- Community Drug Service Tea,
- Pharmacist

Cost of NRT patches

The following is an indication of the cost price of NRT patches for hospital pharmacies:

7 day supply	7mg patches	\$12.00
7 day supply	14mg patches	\$13.00
7 day supply	21mg patches	\$14.70

- The total cost of an 8 week course for one person is approximately \$110.00;
- Costs may vary slightly between pharmacies;
- Costs may vary depending on the individual's level of nicotine dependence, and strength of patches recommended.