

National and Local Approaches to implementing the 'Swap to Stop' Scheme

Vaping has become the most popular quitting aid in England, and vapes are extremely effective for many, particularly when combined with additional behavioural support from Stop Smoking Services (SSS). They are up to twice as effective as the available licensed nicotine replacement therapy at one-fifth of the cost. The latest international research shows that smokers who use a vape every day are 3 times more likely to quit smoking, even if they did not intend to.

In April 2023, the government announced a world-first national 'Swap to Stop' scheme - offering a million smokers across England a free vaping starter kit, investing up to £45 million over 2 years. Smokers who join this scheme must join on one condition - they commit to quit smoking with expert support from local SSS.

A large proportion of this national programme will be delivered in partnership with SSS, who will provide smokers with starter kits as part of their existing offer. The government's associated increased investment in SSS will allow services to reach a larger number of smokers to 'swap to stop' and provide the wraparound support for more specialised staff who can provide essential behavioural support alongside the vaping kit. This programme will therefore support local systems to provide a more attractive and effective vape offer to smokers with three routes of delivering vapes alongside behavioural support:

- (a) Direct supply of vape starter kits to local authority stop smoking services
- (b) Direct supply to local authority led partnerships.
- (c) Digital offer in partnership with NHS England once development is completed

Initial Pathfinder expressions of interest are currently being invited by the National Team until 3rd November 2023 with an expectation that a second wave of applications will be considered later in the year.

Mindful that in Lancashire we have only just recently finished a procurement exercise for our local Stop Smoking Service (Smokefree Lancashire) and that the new provider is currently being mobilised it is our intention to apply as part of Wave 2 once it is announced. We feel we will then be in a strong position to put forward our application accordingly once we have had time to ensure the relevant pathways are in place. In the meantime, we are of course actively exploring with our neighbouring local authorities and NHS colleagues any potential opportunities to put forward system wide applications and look forward to keeping the Lancashire Health and Well Being Board updated as these plans progress.

