



HSE Tobacco Free Ireland Programme
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Deputy Duncan Smith,
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By email to duncan.smith@oireachtas.ie

14th May 2025

Ref: PQ 19492/25

To ask the Minister for Health to outline the number of sign-ups to the QUIT programme in each of the years 2018 to 2024; to itemise funding assigned to the programme per year; if the current QUIT campaign covers nicotine pouches and e-cigarettes; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Smith,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to your above referenced Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for Health. The question concerned was referred to HSE Health and Wellbeing for review and direct response as the work of the Tobacco Free Ireland Programme (TFIP) is part of that function.

Our response to the PQ referenced above is set out below.

Sign-ups to the QUIT programme 2018 - 2024

Stop smoking (QUIT) services are delivered through various channels in Ireland. One-to-one intensive stop smoking support is provided through community-based stop smoking clinics, hospital-based stop smoking clinics, stop smoking support groups and the national QUIT Line phone service. Nationally, over 20,000 people availed of this type of intensive support to stop smoking in 2024. This was the highest number of clients in any given year to date to attend HSE stop smoking services and reflects investment in stop smoking services in 2022 through the Sláintecare Healthy Communities and Enhanced Community Care programmes.

The number of people seeking help to quit smoking is monitored via two key performance indicators in the HSE National Service Plan. These KPIs and the data associated with them are described below:

- QUIT KPI 1 – No. of smokers who received face to face or telephone intensive cessation support from a cessation counsellor
- QUIT KPI 2 – No. of smokers who are receiving online cessation support services (email activated QUIT plan sign-ups).

| <u>Year</u> | <u>QUIT KPI 1 – Face to Face/Telephone Services</u> | <u>QUIT KPI 2 – Online QUIT Plan</u> |
|-------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| 2018 | 10,608 | 8,951 |
| 2019 | 9,235 | 6,490 |
| 2020 | 7,145 | 7,755 |
| 2021 | 8,601 | 6,420 |
| 2022 | 12,477 | 6,316 |
| 2023 | 19,313 | 7,636 |
| 2024 | 20,405 | 8,651 |

Funding 2018 -2024

Tobacco cessation measures include smoking cessation medications provided to clients accessing stop smoking services (either via the Primary Care Reimbursement Scheme or the new HSE free stop smoking medicines scheme), frontline HSE intensive smoking cessation services (staff costs, IT patient management system costs), the National Quitline and mass media (QUIT) campaign.

The QUIT Campaign aims to increase the demand for QUIT support services and National Quitline and medication costs subsequently vary and are demand led.

| <u>Year</u> | <u>Item</u> | <u>€ Cost</u> |
|-------------|--|--------------------------|
| 2018 | Smoking Cessation Medications (PCRS) | 8,640,775 |
| | Social Marketing (QUIT Campaign) | 1,500,000 |
| | National Quitline | 231,746 |
| | Smoking Cessation Staff Costs | 1,485,000 |
| | Quitmanager (IT Capital Development Cost) | 73,918 |
| | Quitmanager Patient Management System | 24,182 |
| | | <u>11,955,621</u> |
| 2019 | Smoking Cessation Medications (PCRS) | 9,492,877 |
| | Social Marketing (QUIT Campaign) | 1,800,000 |
| | National Quitline | 258,453 |
| | Smoking Cessation Staff Costs | 1,425,530 |
| | Quitmanager Patient Management System | 24,182 |
| | | <u>13,001,042</u> |
| 2020 | Smoking Cessation Medications (PCRS) | 9,365,383 |
| | Social Marketing (QUIT Campaign) | 1,688,719 |
| | National Quitline | 267,588 |
| | Smoking Cessation Staff Costs | 1,425,530 |
| | Quitmanager Patient Management System | 24,182 |
| | Slaintecare Integration Fund (2 x Maternity Stop Smoking Services) | 139,194 |
| | | <u>12,910,596</u> |

| | | |
|-------------|--|--------------------------|
| 2021 | Smoking Cessation Medications (PCRS) | 9,213,130 |
| | Social Marketing (QUIT Campaign) | 1,660,000 |
| | National Quitline | 289,813 |
| | Smoking Cessation Staff Costs | 1,784,635 |
| | Quitmanager Patient Management System | 24,182 |
| | We Can Quit Programme Delivery ¹ | 244,620 |
| | | <u>13,216,380</u> |
| 2022 | Smoking Cessation Medications (PCRS) | 9,134,767 |
| | NRT/Stop Smoking Medications via Stop Smoking Services | 276,681 |
| | Social Marketing (QUIT Campaign) | 2,153,992 |
| | National Quitline | 377,388 |
| | Smoking Cessation Staff Costs | 3,179,160 ² |
| | Quitmanager Patient Management System | 33,629 |
| | We Can Quit Programme Delivery | 599,604 |
| | | <u>15,775,221</u> |
| 2023 | Smoking Cessation Medications (PCRS) | 10,043,199 |
| | NRT/Stop Smoking Medications via Stop Smoking Services | 1,240,539 |
| | Social Marketing (QUIT Campaign) | 1,721,315 |
| | National Quitline | 429,152 |
| | Smoking Cessation Staff Costs | 4,722,818 |
| | Quitmanager Patient Management System | 37,257 |
| | We Can Quit Programme Delivery | 558,252 |
| | | <u>18,752,532</u> |
| 2024 | Smoking Cessation Medications (PCRS) | 11,039,128 |
| | NRT/Stop Smoking Medications via Stop Smoking Services | 2,378,793 |
| | Social Marketing (QUIT Campaign) | 1,600,000 |
| | National Quitline | 449,275 |
| | Smoking Cessation Staff Costs | 4,887,653 ³ |
| | Quitmanager Patient Management System | 126,870 ⁴ |
| | We Can Quit Programme Delivery | 475,548 |
| | | <u>20,957,267</u> |

¹ The *We Can Quit* Programme is a peer led; 12-week stop smoking group support programme for disadvantaged communities. This commenced and was funded as a national stop smoking initiative in 2021.

² The development of the Sláintecare Healthy Communities and Enhanced Community Care Chronic Disease Programmes have seen investment in new stop smoking staff to deliver services in disadvantaged areas where smoking prevalence continues to be high.

³ No WTE increase in 2024 – public service pay increase.

⁴ Investment in 2024 for improved reporting and integration with other IT systems (e.g. GP systems).

E-cigarettes and nicotine pouches

The QUIT campaign works to raise awareness about the dangers of tobacco consumption and to motivate and encourage successful quit attempts. The QUIT campaign is specific to tobacco and does not cover e-cigarettes and nicotine pouches.

Work is ongoing within the HSE to increase access to [information on e-cigarettes and nicotine products](#) (including pouches) for young people, parents and schools:

- [Junior Cycle SPHE resources](#) were published in 2023 on the impact of nicotine, tobacco use, second-hand smoke, e-cigarettes and vaping.
- The HSE's [guidance for schools](#) on vaping includes information on the impact of nicotine on adolescents.
- The HSE is currently updating its [public-facing resources](#) on recreational nicotine products such as nicotine pouches.
- Funding (non-recurring) was allocated in Budget 2025 for a youth vaping prevention media campaign. A stakeholder group is currently being formed to review relevant research and evidence, define the specific target audience, identify campaign objectives and then commission the development and implementation of this campaign. Consideration is being given to incorporate other recreational nicotine products such as nicotine pouches.

I hope this information is of assistance to you. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Martina Blake

National Lead
HSE Tobacco Free Ireland Programme