



## Supporting People to Stop Smoking – Advice for General Practitioners

As GPs you have a unique first line and on-going role with your patients about their health. You understand their needs and you are a trusted and influential source of advice for interventions to improve their health, including health behaviour change to stop smoking. Too many people who smoke try to stop without support. You can help and your support will improve the chances that someone will successfully stop smoking and stay stopped for good.

The context of general practice and time available means that focused interventions through *Very Brief Advice* are most suitable:

- **Ask** about smoking status routinely in consultations;
- **Advise** people who smoke to stop and that the best way to stop is using medication and our intensive stop smoking service which provides behavioural support;
- **Act by**
  - 1. Prescribing stop smoking medication (see quick guide [here](#)) and
  - 2. Referring to QUIT (HSE Stop Smoking Service)

GPs also have a unique relationship with patients to discuss their smoking and offer personalised advice on the benefits of quitting for the individual in terms of their own physical and mental health. In addition, GPs are often the first point of contact with health services for pregnant women on confirmation of pregnancy – this can be a pivotal time for positive health behaviour change.

### How can GPs refer to the QUIT Service?

You can now send **electronic referrals** to the HSE Stop Smoking services (QUIT).

Select **HSE QUIT Smoking Services** from the Hospital drop down list to access the referral in either Healthlink Online or your Practice Management System.

Alternatively, referrals can also be mailed directly to the QUIT Team by emailing [quit@healthmail.ie](mailto:quit@healthmail.ie). Healthmail is a secure email ensuring that patient contact information can be shared securely. The only information required for a referral is the patients full name, DOB and telephone number.

