

Pack it in! – get sorted

Final Project Report
Aberdeen Foyer



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1. Introduction

Aberdeen Foyer works with disadvantaged young people aged 16-25 years old who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Through Education & Training Programmes and supported accommodation services. We also work with the following groups of young people: New Deal, Gateway to Work, Job Seekers, Princes Trust Volunteers, single parents, those with drug and alcohol problems and mental health problems, young people with a mild learning disability, young offenders and those at risk of offending.

Aberdeen Foyer works with approximately 80 tenants at any one time, covering 6 accommodation sites in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, and also over a 1,000 people each year participate on a Foyer Learning programme in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire.

Foyer Housing sites are based in Aberdeen City – central and Torry, Fraserburgh, Stonehaven, Peterhead and Banchory.

Foyer Learning programmes operate throughout Aberdeen city, Banff, MacDuff, Fraserburgh, Peterhead and Huntly.

Aberdeen Foyer's New Opportunities funded (NOF) Health Promotion project is a key part of the 'Health Promoting Foyer'. The aim of the project is to develop and implement a health and wellbeing action plan in partnership with service users to address lifestyle, social and environmental determinants of ill health particularly relating to cancer by developing new resources and offering practical support to behaviour change.

There is a history of poor health amongst this client group. With high prevalence of smoking and limited access to mainstream health services.

Results from Aberdeen Foyer's Young People's Health Needs Report 2004 revealed that 22 out of 25 respondents smoked, (88%). Aberdeen Foyer's Mental Health Project – Sorted Not Screwed Up, undertook a wellbeing survey in 2005. This revealed that 15 out of 20 respondents were smokers, (75%). This compares with 32% of males and 26% of females in the general Grampian population. (Grampian Adult Lifestyle Survey. NHS Grampian 2002).

In partnership with NHS Grampian's Smoking Advisory Service, on site smoking cessation services was set up in 2004 alongside raising tobacco awareness as part of the Health promotion action plan. This was offered on a one to one basis over a 6 week period, with one hourly session per week providing advice, information, support, counselling and referral letter to GPs for NRT prescriptions.

The uptake of this service was reasonably successful, but as the grid below indicates, there was a consistent drop off rate around week 2. Service users identified boredom as one of the key reasons for this, along with lack of finances to help improve other lifestyle behaviours at the same time, which they felt came hand in hand with smoking cessation i.e. improving diet, increasing physical activity levels, relaxation etc.

**Smoking cessation sessions at Aberdeen Foyer on a one to one basis from approx
March 04 to Dec 04**

Male/female	Weeks attended	Status	Comments
Male	2 weeks	Stopped for 10 days	No return
Male	1 week		No show after 1 st week
Male	2 weeks	Cut down from 30 to 10 a day	No return
Male	1 week		No return
Male	3 weeks	Stopped completely	
Male	2 weeks	Stopped for 8 days	No return
Male	2 weeks		No return
Male	1 week	Stopped for 3 days	No return
Male	5 weeks	Stopped completely	
Male	2 weeks		No return
Male	1 week		No return

2. 'Pack it in! – Get Sorted'

The aim of 'Pack it in! – Get Sorted' was to try to prevent the poor drop off rates indicated above by providing additional support to the existing smoking cessation service at Aberdeen Foyer. With a funding grant of £2,300 awarded from ASH Scotland Tobacco and Inequalities project, this provided the extra resource to incorporate the addition activities into the established programme, with an aim to improving success rates. The fund was initially awarded for the period May 2005 to May 2006. The project ran successfully during this period, but as expenditure was lower than initially estimated, permission was granted to retain the funding and extend the project for a further year, to the end of June 2007. This work was supported in kind, by NHS Grampian, who provided information resources, Health Information Assistants to participate in National No Smoking Day and Aberdeen Foyer's Health Fairs, ongoing staff training and peer support.

Smoking cessation was originally provided on a one to one basis, as and when clients identified a desire to attend. The 'Pack it in!' project, focused on group work to enhance support, and enable group activities to take place. The sessions were designed to last 2 hours per week, over a 6 week period. The first hour focused on cessation counselling and the second hour for group activity. Programmes were advertised via support workers at all Foyer sites, and posters were designed, printed and displayed throughout all areas.

3. Project Aims

The original aims set out were to:

- **Increase awareness of ill effects of smoking**
- **Reduce the number of smokers within Aberdeen Foyer**
- **Provide support to behaviour change**
- **Provide and suggest alternatives to smoking**
- **Promote healthier lifestyle choices**
- **Offer healthy alternatives as a coping strategy**
- **Organise activities and support participation in other activities**
- **Organise group cessation sessions for peer support**

4. Objectives

Increase awareness of ill effects of smoking:

The initial phase of the project focused on raising awareness around tobacco and highlighting the smoking cessation services on offer.

This was done through organised interactive health sessions at the accommodation sites – using quizzes, discussion, highlighting services and options available and healthy snacks to encourage attendance. Annual Health Fairs in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire with Health Information Assistants offering one to one advice, measuring carbon monoxide levels, face morphing machine, information and advice, and active participation in National No Smoking Day – interactive computer games, Health Information Assistants on site offering information, advice and carbon monoxide measurements

Smoking behaviour is also discussed as part of the individual lifestyle assessments on offer to all Foyer service users on an ongoing basis.

Tobacco and smoking cessation information is displayed throughout all Foyer sites and 'Pack it in!' posters were produced by Foyer Graphics, giving the project its own logo and identity.

Tobacco and smoking is also integrated within the 'Healthy Lifestyle' group sessions delivered on a regular basis to Foyer Learning programmes such as Lifeshapers, Princes Trust, Get into Life, etc

Reduce the number of smokers within Aberdeen Foyer

Pack it in! programme results, detailed below, indicate increased participation in smoking cessation activities, improved attendance on programmes and improved overall cessation results.

Provide support to behaviour change

This was discussed as part of the programme, and individuals were given the opportunity to have a one to one appointment with the Community Health Promotion Worker to address other lifestyle issues.

Smoking diaries were given to all clients during the first week of each programme to record smoking behaviour, and then discussed the following week during group session. Lifestyle diaries were also on offer for those who wanted to address wider lifestyle behaviours. Findings were then discussed and goals agreed for moving forward to a more positive lifestyle.

Provide and suggest alternatives to smoking

Information on relaxation techniques was given to groups. Tai chi, breathing techniques and complimentary therapies were some of the activities arranged during the project.

Detailed discussion during group sessions around high risk situations, defining what these are and looking at coping mechanisms and strategies to cope.

Promote healthier lifestyle choices

Offer healthy alternatives as a coping strategy and

Goody bags were given out each week, starting on week 2 of each programme. These were provided by a local community food initiative, CFINE, at a cost of around £8 per bag. The contents included a mix of fresh fruit, dried fruit, low sugar mints and lollipops, sports cap bottles of water and cartons of fresh juice. This was to encourage positive snack choices, and to prevent replacing smoking with chocolate and other junk foods.

Organise activities and support participation in other activities

Physical activity levels was addressed through discussion on a one to one basis and through organised weekly activities i.e. tai chi, snowboarding, ice skating...

Participants were awarded a monthly gym pass, or vouchers to attend swimming or classes, when they had attended and progressed for the first two weeks, to the value of around £30 per person.

Guided relaxation sessions were organised for the group, and discussed with individuals. Information was given on breathing, relaxation and sleeping patterns.

Organise group cessation sessions for peer support

Support was provided through the weekly group counselling sessions, allowing all participants to share not only their own fears and concerns, but to support each other through the process of stopping smoking.

5. Group Sessions

Six programmes were delivered between June 2005 and June 2007 with a total of 20 participants enrolling for the group sessions throughout the life of the project.

The aim of the programme was to offer weekly sessions over a 6 week period, focusing the first half of the session on smoking behaviour, cessation advice, support and counselling. And the second part of the session on coping strategies and activities, depending on what the groups identified as their priorities. Activities varied from complementary therapy sessions, snowboarding, relaxation techniques, ice skating, tai chi etc.

Each week, starting on week 2, participants were given a 'goody bag' to take away with them. This was provided by CFINE (Community Foods Initiative North East) and contained healthy snacks including grapes, sugar free mints and lollies, bananas, bottled water etc. the contents of the goody bags was in response to clients who had raised concerns around gaining weight when they attempted to stop smoking, and wanted to combat the urge to snack on sugary or high fat foods.

A lifestyle diary was also kept at this time to record current physical activity levels and diet. Participants then created small goals to increase activity levels and stick to a healthy balanced diet.

After 2 positive carbon monoxide readings, participants then had the option to choose an activity that they would pursue on their own over the next 4 weeks. Examples are monthly gym pass, block of karate lessons, snow boarding lesson etc.

If clients completed the programme successfully, they were then awarded a high street voucher of their choice to the value of £30.

6. Pack it in! Programme Outline

Week No	Date & Time	Activity	Handouts
1	2pm – 4pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline programme • Select activities for following sessions • Discuss products available – NRT etc • Group registration • Measure carbon monoxide levels • Discuss current behaviour...how many ..how often...since when etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I quit • Aspire • Pros & cons sheet to be completed for next week • Diary to record smoking behaviour • Lifestyle diaries to record exercise, diet, sleep patterns, drinking etc • Jars to keep cig butts for 1 week - optional
2	2pm – 4pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss & Set quit date • Look at smoking diary , highlight danger times and discuss alternative plans, routines i.e. get up, straight into shower, make fresh juice etc • Decide on products if using • Look at Lifestyle diaries • Set fitness challenges i.e. improve stamina , attend yoga classes, walk to project etc etc increase F&V intake , • Measure carbon levels • Jar of tar • Plan activity for following week 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smoking advisory service information sheets: healthy eating, physical activity, relaxation, health benefits, cost of smoking, • Goody bags
3 – 6	2pm – 4pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss past week's ups and downs • Check diaries • Measure carbon monoxide levels • Organise Access to leisure cards/ gym passes etc • Lifestyle update 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goody bags • Relaxation sheets • Sleeping patterns info sheets

This outline was used as a rough guide, each programme was approached with flexibility to accommodate the mood and needs of the group.

7. Programme Results

Programme 1 – July 2005 Aberdeen

M/F	Weeks attended	Status	Comments	Resources/products used
M	5	Almost stopped completely (had 'a few puffs') over a 3 week period	No further contact	21 mg 24 hr Patches
M	5	Attempted to stop unsuccessfully	No further contact	Nothing used
F	2		Stopped attending	
M	2	Cut down from 20 a day to 2-3 a day		Nothing used

Programme 2 – February 2006 Aberdeen

M/F	Weeks attended	Status	Comments	Resources/products used
F	6	Completely stopped	participant still not smoking after 18 months , and has gone through pregnancy and birth of her baby without smoking at all!	Zyban
M	6	Stopped		Zyban
M	4	Cut down to 1 Or 2 every other day		NRT inhalers
M	3	Went down to 1 a day... had a few days tobacco free	Stress identified as trigger for re starting	NRT patches 14mg

“Hi there, just thought that I would send you an E-mail to say thanks for all the help with the smoking program I found it really helped me to stop smoking especially with the goody bags, the £30 gift vouchers and my new bike to keep me fit (that was my main incentive) lol, The one to ones were good as I found talking about it made me realize how bad smoking really is. I feel like many other people would benefit from it as I did. Many thanks”

Programme 3 – January 2007
Torry, Aberdeen

M/F	Weeks attended	Status	Comments	Resources/products used
M	6	Stopped completely		NRT patches
M	3	No change		

Programme 4 – February 2007
Aberdeen

M/F	Weeks attended	Status	Comments	Resources/products used
F	6	Stopped completely		Read Allan Carr's 'easy way'
M	6 plus	Stopped for 3 months	Restarted due to difficult personal issues... continued regular appointments and has now re set a date to stop again	Tried patched for 1 day and disliked Tried microtabs for few days Read Allan Carr's 'easy way'

“Just a quick email to let you know that I found the smoking cessation service a brilliant help - I hit the 6 month mark on the 30th of this month! (july) - and still feel really positive about it. Even though I gave up through the Allen Carr "Easyway" book - which is quite a personal "journey" - I still found the initial chats with you very helpful in making those final important decisions ie why I want to stop, when should I stop etc etc

It was great - thanks very much!”

Programme 5 – May 2007
Stonehaven

M/F	Weeks attended	Status	Comments	Resources/products used
F	3 (still ongoing at time of writing this report)	Stopped completely		Zyban
M	1		No return	
M	4 (still ongoing at time of writing this report)	Stopped completely		Zyban

*“The positives of smoking cessation is I have stopped smoking for a month and a half with the help Lisa, and I feel like I can stay stopped this time as I don’t feel like I want fags anymore which is a good thing.
I don’t feel like there was any negatives for me as I have done what I wanted to do and stopped smoking.
Thanks very much”*

**Programme 6 – May 2007
Aberdeen**

M/F	Weeks attended	Status	Comments	Resources/products used
F	1	Still smoking	No return	Read Allan Carr’s ‘easy way’
F	1	Stopped during first week	No return or update	Nothing used
F	2		Stop date never set due to dealing with other major lifestyle issues at this time	Patches 21mg 24hr
M	2 (still ongoing at time of writing this report)		Date set to stop	Nothing
M	3	Stopped		Patches

“I found the assistance you gave me a great help as there is so much misinformation around, also when I experienced something new or odd I could check out whether this fell within "normal" parameters. It made the experience less mysterious and daunting and helped me to stay on track. Thank you for your continued support and advice.”

Many more ‘brief interventions’ were undertaken during the course of the project. Service users and staff have taken advantage of having the smoking cessation advisor on site with an ‘open door’ policy, and used this opportunity to pop in for an informal chat on their tobacco use, information on services and products available, support and advice.

8. Discussion/Conclusion

Strengths

The main strengths of the project were the accessibility of the smoking cessation advisor. A good relationship already existed with clients, and sound understanding of what the client's current health needs and issues were. With the service available in house, the programme was allowed to be flexible and develop around the arising needs of the clients. The programme could then be delivered at a location to suit the group, and at a time decided by the group. The 'open door' policy adopted by the Foyer Health team, meant service users were not restricted to the group sessions only, but could pop in at any time for support and advice.

Weaknesses

Working with a 'hard to reach' client group made for a challenging project at times. Good group dynamics were very important to the success of the group, and didn't always work out as intended. 2 participants on the first programme had difficulty getting along and this resulted in a negative, non supportive atmosphere. Care was taken after that, on whom and when to offer a group place to.

It became evident during the early programmes that attendance and poor time keeping could be a potential issue with this client group, therefore structures were put in place to try to combat this. Lifestyle diaries were encouraged to be used to plan the week ahead, to keep participants mindful of their aim. Clients were contacted by text to reaffirm group times and meetings organised.

Staff Training

In partnership with NHS Grampian's Smoking Advice Service, 4 members of Aberdeen Foyer staff have now attended Smoking Cessation Support training. 2 have completed 'Brief Intervention' training and 2 have completed Smoking Cessation Adviser training, with another waiting to enrol in the next course. This will enable smoking cessation to continue throughout Aberdeen Foyer, delivered in an environment familiar to participants, with a member where there is established relationships and understanding of needs.

9. Case studies

Miss L

Aberdeen Foyer tenant and Princes Trust programme participant, female, aged 19 (at first contact with Foyer Health team), with a history of depression, attended a one to one appointment to discuss smoking cessation. She had smoked since the age of 12 and smoking approx 20 a day at that time. She decided at that time she was not yet ready to make an attempt at stopping. 2 months later she returned, ready to make the commitment, she attended 2 one to one sessions, cut down from then 15 a day to 2-3 a day, but due to her personal situation, she felt unable to continue at that time. Miss L returned again 3 months later, this time signing up to the 'pack it in!' group session. She decided to try Zyban this time, with the support of her GP, and successfully stopped smoking the 2nd week of the 6 week programme. Miss L reported increasing her intake of fruit as a way of combating her concerns of gaining weight, and increased her activity levels. She engaged well within the group, providing support to others as well as talking openly about her own experience. 18 months on..... and Miss L is now the proud mother of an 8 month old daughter..... she has never smoked again.

Mr S

Aberdeen Foyer tenant, male, unemployed, aged 19 signed up for 'pack it in!' group sessions after discussion with his Housing Support Worker. Mr S had smoked for 7 years from the age of 12, and smoked around 30 cigarettes a day. He was keen on fitness, and felt his current fitness levels were poor due to his smoking behaviour. Mr S explained that he was surrounded by smokers, including his mother, girlfriend and friends, so he was apprehensive about how successful he would be. Mr S chose to use NRT patches, provided free of charge via the community pharmacy scheme, and successfully stopped on week 2 of the programme. Mr S chose to have his bicycle repaired by the programme as his reward, and used cycling as his coping strategy. 3 months on..... Mr S is still a non smoker and still cycling every day.

10. Next steps.....

Aberdeen Foyer will continue to promote tobacco awareness and provide smoking cessation support. We are currently looking for funding to implement the 'pack it in!' programme in full, and would like to expand this programme to incorporate a pilot cannabis cessation service, if appropriate funding sourced.

Aberdeen Foyer will continue to encourage staff to attend Smoking Cessation Advisor training, with the intention of eventually having trained workers at all Foyer sites.

11.References

Aberdeen Foyer. 2004. Young People's Health Needs Report

Aberdeen Foyer. 2005. Mental Health Project – Sorted Not Screwed up. Wellbeing Survey

NHS Grampian. 2002. Grampian Adult Lifestyle Survey