

Fastfacts

Smoking in Scotland

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Smoking rates

- 17% of adults in Scotland are current smokers (19% of men and 16% of women)
- Smoking rates have dropped significantly from 52% in 1974, to 28% in 2003, and 17% in 2019
- 2% of 13 year olds and 7% of 15 year olds in Scotland are regular smokers
- E-cigarette use in adults have remained stable since 2015, at 7%
- An average of 13,300 children aged 11– 15 start smoking each year in Scotland
- 14.6% of pregnant women in Scotland smoke at the time of their first antenatal appointment
- Around two-thirds (68% in 2019) of Scottish smokers say they would like to stop smoking

Death and disease

- There are 9,360 smoking-attributable deaths a year accounting for 16% of all Scottish deaths
- There are nearly 100,000 smoking-related hospital admissions every year in Scotland, equating to 1,923 people a week, 274 people a day or 11 people an hour
- in Scotland amongst the 35 - 69 age group an average of 22 years of life are lost for every smoking-related death

Inequalities

- 32% of adults living in the most deprived SIMD quintile smoke, compared to 6% in the least deprived. The gap between smoking prevalence in the most deprived and the least deprived areas has increased to 26%, from the lowest ever (18%) in 2017
- 26% of people with a limiting long-term condition in Scotland, smoke
- In the most deprived areas, of those with a possible psychiatric condition, 42% smoke, whereas this figure is only 11% in the least deprived areas
- With people who have four or more anxiety symptoms in the most deprived areas 45% smoke, whereas this figure is only 4% in the least deprived areas
- 26.6% of pregnant women in the most deprived SIMD quintile are current smokers at the time of their first antenatal appointment, compared to 3.3% in the least deprived
- If the smoking rate in the 20% most deprived areas of Scotland fell just 1% (from 32% to 31%) Scotland's poorest communities would save around £16 million a year*.

* 1% reduction is 8584 fewer smokers saving £1875 on average – see our briefing 'Calculating the cost of Smoking'

Economics

- A 2010 report showed that smoking costs Scotland nearly £1.1 billion every year*
- Smoking costs more to Scotland than the tax revenue it generates
- In 2009 the costs attributable to smoking to NHS Scotland were between 323M and 509M*

*There are no newer estimates

Action on Smoking & Health (Scotland) (ASH Scotland) is a registered Scottish charity (SC 010412) and a company limited by guarantee (Scottish company no 141711)

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