

Providing advice: where next?

As you move through step 4, (and providing information about options such as NRT) it is appropriate to summarise the session so far and then ask:

“In terms of your smoking, where does that leave you now/what would you like to do about your smoking?”

You could broadly categorise the patient’s response under one of three broad headings:

- “not ready to quit”
- “not sure about quitting/ambivalent”
- “ready to quit”

Not ready

If the patient is “not ready for change”, provide advice on the risks of continuing to smoke and the benefits of quitting. Also provide advice on the health effects from passive smoking. Are there harm minimisation strategies that might be useful (e.g. not smoking in the car/enclosed spaces, especially when others are present). Advise the patient that help is available if required and provide details (e.g. Quitline). Remind patient of the Smoke Free policy and discuss Nicotine Replacement Therapy options that will enable the patient to refrain from smoking while an in-patient.

Not sure

If the patient is not sure where they are in terms of their smoking, explore any identified barriers. Offer written information about the risks of smoking and the benefits of quitting. Advise the patient that help is available if required and provide details. Remind patient of the Smoke Free policy and discuss Nicotine Replacement Therapy options that will enable the patient to refrain from smoking while an in-patient. Provide self-help material that may help them consider options.

Ready

If the patient is ready to quit smoking, affirm their decision and provide encouragement. Provide resources such as self help manuals ([link](#)) and discuss quit plans and how you can help (e.g. provide NRT; provide referral to Quitline). Recommend NRT where indicated and discuss relapse prevention (discussed shortly).

Discuss various support options that are available, including websites and self-help materials (i.e. Quitline, QuitCoach, Fresh Start course links). You might find it useful to go to the Quitcoach website, to have an idea what this service offers patients (www.QuitCoach.org.au).

While in hospital, all patients should be offered NRT to help them comply with the Policy. Therefore, based on responses from Fagerstrom Test for Nicotine Dependence, offer the patient recommended Nicotine Replacement Therapy according to their level of dependence. Remember to consider contraindications and precautions – refer to Medical Officer if appropriate. A patient's previous quit attempts/experiences may also provide assistance in which products may be suitable.