

Foreword:

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In recent years, the roles and aims of Mental Healthcare Professionals have broadened considerably. We are increasingly setting more holistic goals, working not only to facilitate improvements in our service users' symptoms and behaviour, but also in their quality of life, social opportunities and physical health.

Addressing poor physical health can be difficult. It often requires us to take on new knowledge, skills and ways of working. However, without attention to our service users' physical health we will never fully be able to address their mental health, as the two are intrinsically linked.

There are few more serious threats to physical health than smoking. Smoking is a major cause of premature death, illness and disability. It also drains financial resources and impacts on psychological well-being. Society, as a whole, is gradually turning its back on smoking, with thousands of people quitting every year. However, smoking rates among mental health service users remain high.

If you are living with a mental health condition, stopping smoking is not easy. One reason for this has been a lack of Stop Smoking Support designed to address the needs of mental health service users. Times are changing, however, and increasing numbers of mental healthcare professionals are training in and delivering pharmacological and psychological treatments aimed at helping people quit.

"Quitting in Mind" is intended as a resource for this work. It draws together key research findings in the field and highlights some important considerations when designing interventions. It is not a 'script' for delivering quit support, rather it represents a framework to which clinicians can add their own skills, knowledge and experience.

The guidance presented here is only a starting point. 'Quitting in Mind' is intended to be a dynamic resource that will develop with its subject area. As new research and new treatments come to light, the guidance will be updated and grow.

Staying up to date will be important, as this area of work is likely to grow rapidly. As it does, we will see more and more mental health service users take on the challenge of stopping smoking, resulting in benefits not only for their physical health, but also for their mental well-being, financial resources and general quality of life.