

Factsheet on...

Tobacco

How Big A Problem Is Smoking?

The Greater Manchester Health Commission recognises smoking as the single most important preventable cause of illness and death. There is a strong association between deprivation and the prevalence of smoking.

Why Is Tackling Smoking An Important Issue in Greater Manchester?

The risks associated with smoking and exposure to second-hand smoke represent the greatest threat to our individual and collective health in the UK.

Evidence shows smoking can cause:

- Heart and circulatory disease
- Cancers – especially lung cancer
- Respiratory disease
- Asthma
- Chest and ear infections in children

The prevalence of smoking in more deprived neighbourhoods can be more than double that of the typical borough rate and smoking is therefore one of the main factors contributing to health inequalities in Greater Manchester.

Despite the hard-won success of the past few decades, which has seen smoking generally decline and become less recognised as the social norm, in the communities where it is most prevalent there are still significant challenges, not least because of the rates of early death from smoking-related illnesses.

What Are People's Attitudes To Smoking?

Key findings of the 'Attitudes To Smoking Consultation 2010' included:

Impact Of The Recession

Over two-thirds of respondents said that the recession had made no impact on their smoking habits. One tenth had smoked less and 7% had tried to quit.

Purchase Habits

A fifth of respondents had purchased cheaply priced cigarettes or tobacco.

Legislation

74% of respondents supported the law to make all enclosed public places and work places smoke free; a 4% increase since 2008. Over nine tenths of respondents agreed that the legislation is good for the health of the general public, as well as most workers and bar workers. 92% also agreed that pubs, bars and restaurants are a more pleasant place to be since they went smoke free.

Perceived Dangers of Second Hand Smoke
89% of respondents thought that second hand smoke has either a big (70%) or some (19%) impact on increasing the risk to a child's health.

Smoking In Cars

84% of respondents agreed to some extent that smoking should be banned in cars that are carrying children under 18.



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The Association of Greater Manchester
Primary Care Trusts

55% agreed to some extent that smoking should be banned in cars carrying any passengers and around half agree that smoking should be banned in all cars.

Support For Change

92% supported a measure to make it an offence for an adult to buy cigarettes on behalf of a child. Support was also high for licensing and enforcement measures, with the vast majority of respondents (93%) backing a measure for businesses to have a valid licence to sell tobacco, which can be removed.

Attitudes To The Tobacco Industry

67% agree that tobacco companies, not customers, should have to pay extra tax on their profits to reflect the harm they do to people, while 69% agreed that the tobacco industry does more harm than good to the country.

Attitudes To Support Services

86% of respondents agree to some extent that smokers who are in hospital waiting for an

operation or treatment should be approached by the NHS stop smoking services. 94% agreed that smokers should be encouraged not to smoke in a car with their child and 93% agreed that smokers should be encouraged not to smoke in their home if it's shared with a child.

What is the Greater Manchester Health Commission Doing?

The Greater Manchester Health Commission is committed to raising the importance of the harm to health caused by smoking in Greater Manchester and encouraging local government and its partners to take action.

During 2008, the Greater Manchester Health Commission produced a tobacco manifesto, which has continued to shape its actions in this area. The Commission is committed to reducing the number of people in Greater Manchester who smoke.

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