

# Core brief

**Daily update**  
**(30 July 2025, 11.15am)**

## **Public Health Minister Jenni Minto visits community pharmacy to champion Quit Your Way smoking cessation service**



Pictured above, left to right: David Gould, Vice Chair, NHSGGC; Ashgher Mohammed MBE, Director of Abbey Chemist; Jenni Minto, Public Health Minister; Jane Hall, NHSGGC Deputy Director of Pharmacy; Rehaan Saleem, pharmacy student; Tiffany Lam, locum pharmacist; Suzie Rasticova Volek, dispenser; Claire Ibrahim, dispenser; Matt Barclay, Chief Executive, Community Pharmacy Scotland; Leanne Bertram, dispenser; Craig Morrison, pharmacist

Public Health Minister Jenni Minto visited a community pharmacy this week to learn more about the vital role they play in helping people quit smoking.

Ms Minto spoke with pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and support staff at Paisley's Abbey Chemist about the Quit Your Way service, and met NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde's Vice Chair David Gould, Deputy Director of Pharmacy Jane Hall, and Matt Barclay, Chief Executive of Community Pharmacy Scotland.

The visit highlighted the importance of accessible, local support in tackling smoking-related harm.

Smoking is attributed to the deaths of nearly 9,000 people in Scotland each year - making services like Quit Your Way essential in improving public health outcomes.

Abbey Chemist has supported 20 people on their quit journey through the programme so far this year.

This national service offers a structured 12-week plan tailored to each individual, beginning with an initial consultation to explore their reasons for quitting and assess their mindset.

Weekly face-to-face check-ins follow, during which the pharmacy team monitors their progress and provides ongoing support including Nicotine Replacement Therapy such as patches or gum, or Varenicline, a recently introduced medicine that helps reduce cravings and withdrawal symptoms.

During her visit, Ms Minto met service user Frances Robertson, 66, who is being supported by the programme to give up smoking after she suffered a heart attack on 18 July.

Frances, a gran-of-three from Paisley, said: “I’ve spent my whole life on and off cigarettes but now this is my chance to get healthy.



“I’ve had the kick up the bum I need and stopping smoking is one of the lifestyle changes I’m making.

“When I had the heart attack I was taken to the Royal Alexandra Hospital emergency department. It was the hospital that put me on to the Quit Your Way service, and told me I could go into any community pharmacy and they’d help me continue it once I was discharged.

“I’m feeling great now, and the staff in the pharmacy have been really supportive.” Across NHSGGC, 60% of all quit attempts are made through pharmacies, with 8,044 quit attempts supported between April 2024 and March 2025.

Notably, 5,058 of these were made by people living in the 40% most deprived areas, underscoring the programme’s reach and equity.

Community pharmacies play a key role in the provision of healthcare, and can often help resolve health challenges without the need to see a GP or attend A&E by providing advice or support to access services.

Every community pharmacy in Scotland provides the NHS Pharmacy First Scotland service, which offers advice, support and treatment for a range of minor ailments from coughs and colds to earache and heartburn.

Anyone can walk in and be seen by a qualified member of the pharmacy team, with no appointment necessary.

Mr Gould praised the dedication of pharmacy teams, saying: "Pharmacies are at the heart of our communities and play a crucial role in supporting people to lead healthier lives.

"The Quit Your Way programme is a shining example of how local pharmacy services can make a real impact.

"It was fantastic to meet Ms Minto and the staff of the Abbey Chemist in Paisley to hear more about how the service is making a difference."

Ms Hall said: "With 283 pharmacies across the Greater Glasgow and Clyde area offering free one-to-one support to stop smoking, our message is clear: quitting smoking is possible, and help is available close to home.

"Our pharmacy teams are not only providing medication, they're offering encouragement, expertise, and continuity of care.

"With Quit Your Way, you're more likely to stop and stay-stopped, than you are going it alone.

"Whether someone starts their quit journey in hospital or walks into their local pharmacy, we're here to help them succeed."

Public Health Minister Jenni Minto said: "It was great to see the community pharmacy smoking cessation service in action this week - and congratulations to Frances on starting her quit journey.

"The free Quit Your Way service supports our goal to eradicate tobacco by 2034 and I would encourage anyone, no matter how long they have smoked, to access this service to quit smoking."

For more information or to find your nearest participating pharmacy, visit the [Quit Your Way](#) website or [NHS Inform](#).





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Greater Glasgow and Clyde

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Do I need to go out?  
For information on treating minor illnesses and injuries from home, go to **NHS inform** or download the **NHS 24 App**.

**B**

**Be aware**  
There is help on your doorstep.  
Your local **GP, pharmacy, dental practice and optician** offer a range of services.

**C**

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If it's urgent, or you're unsure, call **NHS 24** on **111**. They'll get you the care you need.

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