

Improving access to smoking and vaping cessation support for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness through community partnership and outreach

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Background (107): Up to 82% of people experiencing or at risk of homelessness smoke, making tobacco use a major contributor to disease in this population [1]. Individuals often experience compounding stressors, including mental health concerns and reduced access to health support. Housing and homelessness services play a key role in supporting individuals to navigate access to healthcare. However, tailored and evidence-based support is needed to address high smoking prevalence in this population. To aid Queenslanders in quitting smoking or vaping, Quitline offers the Intensive Quit Support (IQS) program which provides a free supply of nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) products for up to 12 weeks and multiple planned counselling calls.

Description of Model of Care/Intervention (66): The IQS program is available to priority populations, including people accessing government housing services and support from organisations registered with Quitline through dedicated referral pathways. The program is also available to attendees of community events (e.g. Homeless Connect) via on-the-spot referrals by a Quitline representative. Upon onboarding, Quitline ensures that participants have access to phones, mailing addresses, and the ability to manage their own NRT supply.

Effectiveness/Acceptability/Implementation (62): Implementation focuses on engagement with partner organisations (i.e. delivering Quitline in-services, etc.) and participation in community events. Currently, 13 Queensland Government housing services and nine organisations supporting people experiencing or at risk of homelessness are registered with Quitline to provide their clients access to the IQS program. Since 2023, Quitline has engaged an average of 40 individuals at each Homeless Connect event.

Conclusion and Next Steps (36): Embedding Quitline referral pathways within existing services and community outreach improves awareness and access to evidence-based smoking and vaping cessation support. Further engagement with government housing services and other organisations may be required to expand reach.

Implications on communities, practice, policy, and/or First Nations communities (22): This model highlights the importance of integrated smoking and vaping cessation support and community outreach in addressing health inequities among priority populations.

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Reference:

1. Hanley-Jones S, Kalitsis L, Greenhalgh EM, Scollo MM. 9A.4 People experiencing homelessness - Tobacco in Australia [Internet]. Greenhalgh EM, Scollo MM, Winstanley M, editors. [Tobaccoinaustralia.org.au](https://www.tobaccoinaustralia.org.au). Cancer Council Victoria; 2024. Available from: https://www.tobaccoinaustralia.org.au/chapter-9-disadvantage/in-depth/9a-4_people-experiencing-homelessness

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