

From the Chief Medical Officer  
**Dr Michael McBride**



Department of  
**Health, Social Services  
and Public Safety**

[www.dhsspsni.gov.uk](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk)

**Circular HSC (SQSD) (NICE) 38/08 PHG 5**

AN ROINN

**Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta  
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí**

MÁNNYSTRIE O

**Poustie, Resydënter Heisin  
an Fowk Siccar**

Chief Executives of HSS Boards – **for distribution to:**  
Directors of Public Health  
Directors of Nursing  
Directors of Pharmaceutical Services  
Directors of Primary Care – for cascade to prescribing and GP  
Advisors

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Chief Executives of HSC Trusts – **for distribution to:**  
Medical Directors – for cascade to relevant staff  
Directors of Nursing – for cascade to relevant staff  
Directors of Pharmaceutical Services – for cascade to relevant  
staff

Date: 18 July 2008

General Practitioners

HSC Clinical and Social Governance Leads

Chief Executives of HSC Special Agencies and NDPBs

**For Information**

Chairs of HSS Boards  
Chairs of HSC Trusts  
Chief Executive, Regulation & Quality Improvement Authority  
Chief Officers HSC Councils  
Chief Executive/Postgraduate Dean, NIMDTA  
Chief Executive, NIPPET  
Chief Executive, NIPEC  
Chief Executive, RMSC

Dear Colleagues

**NICE Public Health Intervention Guideline No PH 5 – Workplace Smoking**

Reducing smoking and tobacco-related harm is a key government strategy for improving the health of the population and reducing health inequalities. Since 30 April 2007 in Northern Ireland (1 July 2007 in England), smoking has been prohibited in virtually all enclosed public places and workplaces. Failure to comply is an offence.

Employers are not legally obliged to help employees to stop smoking. However, employers that do provide cessation support could reduce the risk of non-compliance with the law, as

well as taking advantage of the opportunity it offers to improve people's health. They will also benefit from reduced sickness absence and increased productivity.

This guidance is for HSC and non-HSC professionals and employers who have a role in - or responsibility for - supporting and encouraging employees who smoke to quit. This includes those working in local authorities and the community, voluntary and private sectors.

It recommends the most effective and cost effective approaches. These range from providing information on local stop smoking services and allowing people who smoke to attend these services during working hours without loss of pay, to the provision of such services in the workplace itself.

DHSSPS advises that this guidance is valid for Northern Ireland and endorses it as good practice guidance for the HSC sector.

The full public health guideline is available for download at:

<http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/index.jsp?action=byID&o=11381>

The HSC sector also should note that;

- 1) NICE has developed tools to help organisations implement this guidance. These are available at <http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/index.jsp?action=byID&o=11381> and include costing tools, implementation advice and audit criteria to monitor local practice;
- 2) This guidance will be updated by NICE as required;
- 3) This guidance should be considered in the context of the *Investing for Health* strategy which sets out broad policy for improving population health and reducing health inequalities in Northern Ireland. The guidance should also be considered in the context of the relevant Northern Ireland strategies, programmes, targets and actions underpinning *Investing for Health*, and also in the context of the Northern Ireland Five Year Tobacco Action Plan 2003 - 2008.

All NICE guidance endorsed by the Department to date can be accessed on the DHSSPS website at <http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/sqsd-guidance-nice-guidance>

Circular HSS (PPMD) (NICE)01/006 issued on 30 June 2006 provides further information on the Northern Ireland process for reviewing NICE guidance and further details on the local status of the Institute's guidance. This circular can be accessed at:

[http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/nice\\_guidance\\_01-06.pdf](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/nice_guidance_01-06.pdf)



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