

# JUST ADD QUIT CARDS

Mel Stephenson, Brian Millen, Shona Muir, Avril Lee & Jane Hooker

## The high cost of smoking

**5,000 deaths in New Zealand each year are smoking related.**

**New Zealand spends \$350 million annually on smoking related healthcare.**

**Over 76,000 people in Waitemata smoke.**

**Nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) doubles the success rate for attempts to quit smoking.**



Using nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) doubles the chance of a quit attempt succeeding. NRT works by reducing the symptoms of nicotine withdrawal. NRT is routinely provided free of charge to inpatients who smoke.

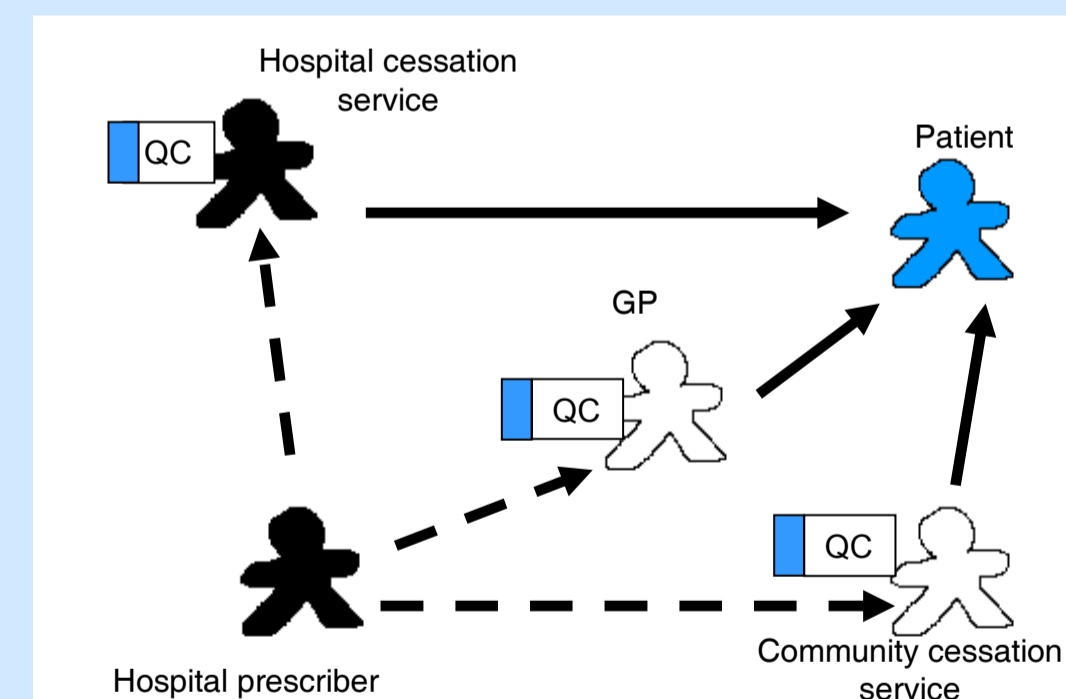
Once patients leave the hospital there may be financial barriers to continuing to use NRT. The Quit Card programme, funded by the Ministry of Health, helps ameliorate this. Quit Cards can be supplied to people who smoke by trained Quit Card providers, or by any health professional able to prescribe medication (doctors, midwives, dentists etc). These can be exchanged at community pharmacies for subsidised NRT.

### Cost of 4 weeks supply of NRT patches

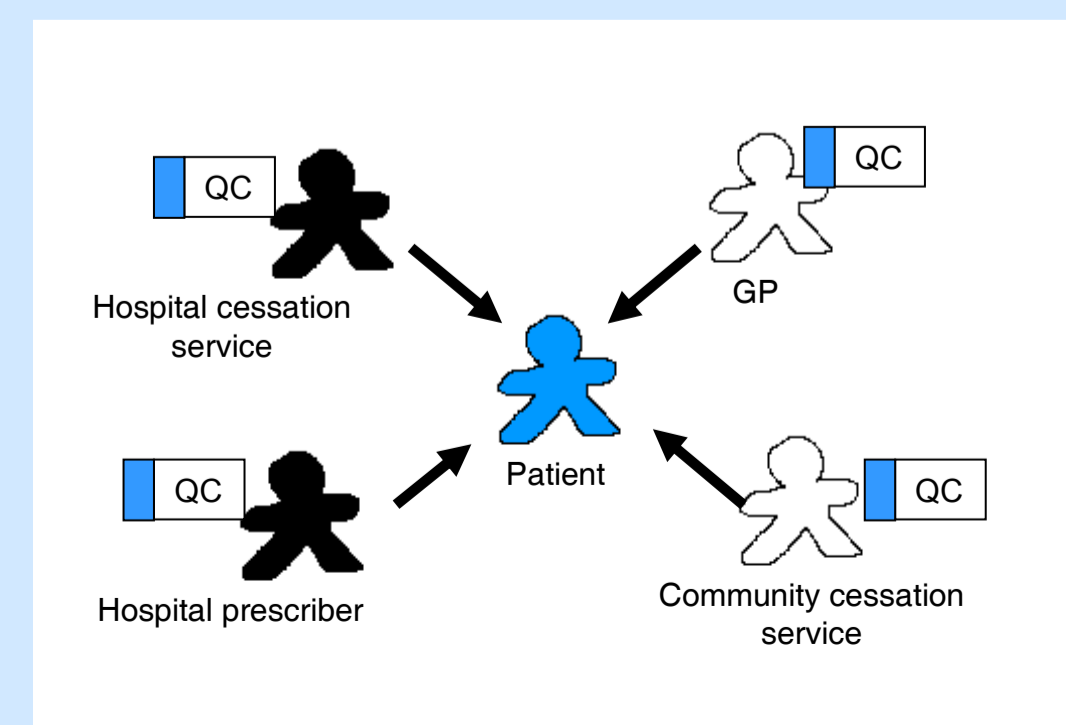
|                              |        |
|------------------------------|--------|
| With Quit Card               | \$ 5   |
| Prescription or over counter | \$ 90+ |

Prior to December 2008 getting Quit Cards to hospital patients required significant effort from prescribers and/or patients. This frequently resulted in patients discontinuing NRT use on discharge, or paying full price for their NRT.

### 2008: Indirect Quit Card provision at Waitemata DHB



### 2009: Direct Quit Card provision at Waitemata DHB



The Smokefree Service, Pharmacy Department and Healthcare Improvement team collaborated on a plan to make Quit Cards directly available from hospital prescribers. From December 2008, Quit Cards were centrally distributed by the pharmacy department.

Hospital prescribers continue to refer patients to community healthcare and cessation services (e.g. GP, Quitline, Aukati KaiPaipa and Asian Smokefree Communities). Community based cessation providers can offer intensive support, and follow up for NRT. Sustained follow up is an essential component of successful cessation treatment.

|                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| KIA AUARI KORE • QUIT CARD |  |
| 1212760                    | Subsidised Nicotine Patches, Gum or Lozenges |
| Product and Dose:          | Issued by:                                   |
| Client name and address:   | Pharmacy name/department number:             |

Quit Cards are available throughout North Shore and Waitakere hospitals from the Pyxis automated medication distribution system. Acute hospital services without Pyxis are supplied Quit Cards through the pharmacy imprest system.

A leaflet and intranet page provide information for Waitemata DHB staff unfamiliar with NRT and/or the Quit Card programme. [http://intranet/smokefree/Quit\\_Cards.asp](http://intranet/smokefree/Quit_Cards.asp)

Routine provision of Quit Cards to patients who smoke is expected to:

- Increase the number of patients successful in quitting smoking
- Reduce cost to patients
- Increase staff awareness of NRT and its role in smoking cessation
- Improve the health of our community

### Acknowledgements:

Marilyn Crawley, Inpatient Pharmacy department, Participating staff from across Waitemata DHB.