



Tuesday, 10th March 2009

Pharmaceutical Society Urge Public “Help is Out There” for Smoking Cessation

On the eve of National non-smoking day (Wednesday 11th March), the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland has reminded the public of avenues for help when trying to quit smoking.

Raymond Anderson, President of the Pharmaceutical Society advised:

“Going cold turkey is not for everyone and Nicotine Replacement Therapy, available through your local pharmacy, is a well-proven method of relieving withdrawal symptoms. Indeed, recent evidence, with over 40,000 people used in the analysis, showed that the chances of stopping smoking were increased by up to 70%.”

“I therefore counsel anyone having problems giving up cigarettes, visit your local pharmacist and get advice. Now is the time to break the habit and your pharmacist is there to help.”

The Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland also support measures proposed in the current Health Bill before Parliament to tackle the take-up of smoking, including banning the display of cigarettes in shops, supermarkets and newsagents.

The Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland has also stated its support for proposals to enforce plain packaging of cigarettes as a move to further remove any remaining glamour associated with smoking. The Government has not included this power in its current Health Bill, however an amendment by backbench peers is being debated in the House of Lords on National No Smoking Day (Wednesday 11th March).

Ends

For further information please contact Mark Neale at the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland, on 028 90 326 927 or 07854 004 884 mark.neale@psni.org.uk

Editor's notes

1. The Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland is the regulatory and professional body for pharmacy in Northern Ireland. Its principal objective is the protection of patient safety in the provision of pharmacy services in Northern Ireland. As the professional body it also seeks to develop the pharmacy profession in Northern Ireland in the public interest.
2. Details of the latest academic research on the success of Nicotine Replacement Therapy in helping people quit smoking, suggesting a 50 to 70% improvement in likelihood of quitting successfully, is available here:

<http://www.cochrane.org/reviews/en/ab000146.html>

3. In Northern Ireland, a regional scheme exists to help smokers quit through their local pharmacies, supported by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety. The scheme provides support, advice and medication if necessary for those committed to stopping.
4. The amendment to the Health Bill currently before Parliament which would introduce powers for the Secretary of State for Health in London to enforce plain packaging for cigarettes in England will be heard on National No Smoking Day, Wednesday 11 March. The Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland supports such Government action and its additional application to Northern Ireland. It is available to read below:

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200809/ldbills/018/amend/ml018-vi.htm>