Hard-hitting campaign highlights 16 cancers linked to smoking

Local alliances join together to help smokers to quit, as Yorkshire and Humber tops the smoking league

Every day, 16 people from the Yorkshire and the Humber area discover they have cancer caused by smoking. While most smokers know about the link between smoking and lung cancer, many people do not realise that smoking is linked with not one but 16 different cancers, including cancers of the mouth, nasal cavities, pharynx and larynx, stomach, kidney, bowel, liver, pancreas, ureter, oesophagus, cervix, bladder and ovaries as well as myeloid leukaemia.

Quit16 is a hard-hitting campaign that highlights the 16 cancers associated with smoking and asks people to quit. It is the first region-wide anti-smoking campaign that includes advertising on television and online, by local tobacco control alliances, collaborating as Breathe 2025, and supported by Cancer Research UK.

It is based on a campaign first developed and run in Australia in 2014 by the Cancer Council Western Australia, with 74% of smokers who saw it seriously considering quitting and 20% discussing quitting with a health professional as a result.

Yorkshire and the Humber has the highest adult smoking rates in the country, with 20% of adults still smoking.

The campaign launched today, Monday 1 February, and runs throughout the month. The campaign website is http://www.quit16.co.uk

Dr Andrew Furber, from Breathe 2025, said:

‘The films and message are brutally honest: there are 16 cancers caused by smoking. Some will kill you quickly, others more slowly and it’s you and your family that have to live through it. Stopping smoking is the best thing you can do to reduce the risk that one of those deaths will be you.

‘Quitting isn’t easy but there is lots of help out there from face to face support to personalised texts, emails and apps. You can find out details of support near you on our website Quit16.co.uk

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1 Average based on Yorkshire and the Humber cancer incidence and mortality attributable to smoking, 2013 – see Notes for editors note 3
‘We are the worst in England when it comes to smoking. But we want to be the best and to make sure the next generation of children born and brought up in the places across Yorkshire and The Humber, never start smoking and grow up free of the terrible health harms associated with tobacco.’

Dr Louise Merriman, the GP cancer lead at the Yorkshire and Humber Strategic Clinical Network said:

"Most people are aware that smoking can cause lung cancer, but there is a huge lack of general awareness about the true health harms of smoking. People who smoke are at an increased risk of a range of cancers and you're also more likely to have a stroke, a heart attack, and develop different health conditions including coronary heart disease.

"We want to encourage all smokers out there to find out more about quitting. Your GP can give you lots of advice and information and there are a range of resources available to help you."

Dr Julie Sharp, Cancer Research UK’s head of health and patient information, said:

“Many people are aware of the link between smoking and lung cancer but many are unaware that it’s linked to many other cancers as well, including mouth, bowel and bladder cancer.

“The best thing smokers can do is give up - for their own health as well as their friends’ and family’s. Quitting can be extremely difficult, but it greatly reduces the risk of smoking-related cancers, as well as other illness such as heart and lung disease. For those who are ready to give up, local Stop Smoking Services are the best place to start. The earlier you stop smoking the better but it’s never too late to quit.”

Professor Kevin Fenton, National Director for Health and Wellbeing at Public Health England said:

“Smoking remains the biggest killer in England and in the North deaths related to smoking stand at over 28,000 every year. We need to focus our efforts on our communities who are most at risk and national and local partnerships are key in this work. It is fantastic to see local councils from across the North working together to encourage smokers to quit now, completely and forever.”

For more information please contact: Diane Bell on 0113 855 7341 or 07789 653402 diane.bell@phe.gov.uk

Issued on behalf of Breathe 2025 by PHE Yorkshire and Humber press office
Notes for editors

1. Dave McKenna, 66, from Staithes, was diagnosed with cancer of the tongue, when his GP found a large lump during a check-up. The former teacher underwent 28 gruelling sessions of radiotherapy and five sessions of chemotherapy. He also had a radical neck dissection; a long and complicated neck procedure which involved cutting from the back of his ear, down his neck and across his chest looking for cancerous cells. Dave smoked 2oz of pipe tobacco a week prior to his diagnosis but quit in 2008 overnight. For more on Dave’s story and for images and film from the campaign please contact: Diane Bell on 0113 855 7341 07789 653402

2. The first TV adverts are due to air on ITV One at Monday 1 February, in advertising breaks around Emmerdale and Coronation St. Details on the campaign, including how to get local stop smoking support are available on the campaign website http://www.quit16.co.uk The campaign is also being run in the North East, linking with Fresh, the North East’s independent office of tobacco control.


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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>New cancer cases (from smoking)</th>
<th>Deaths (from smoking related cancers)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barnsley</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>173</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>465</td>
<td>335</td>
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<tr>
<td>Calderdale</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>156</td>
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<td>Doncaster</td>
<td>358</td>
<td>245</td>
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<tr>
<td>East Riding of Yorkshire</td>
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<td>296</td>
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<td>Leeds</td>
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<td><strong>Yorkshire and the Humber</strong></td>
<td><strong>5843</strong></td>
<td><strong>3902</strong></td>
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Source: PHE based on Cancer Incidence and Mortality figures from the National Cancer Registry System, using estimates from Cancer Research UK that nearly one in five (19.4 per cent) of new cases of cancer in the UK are caused by smoking and research led by Richard Peto at the University of Oxford that 28 per cent of deaths from cancer in the UK are caused by smoking.

4. Proportion of adult smokers in Yorkshire and the Humber (percentage)
5. Breathe 2025 is the overarching campaign brand for work and aspirations to eliminate tobacco-related harms and health inequalities across Yorkshire and The Humber. Our vision is to see the next generation of children born and raised in a place free from tobacco, where smoking is unusual. For more information visit www.breathe2025.org.uk facebook.com/breathe2025

Dr Andrew Furber leads on tobacco control on behalf of directors of public health in the Yorkshire and The Humber region. He is Director of Public Health at Wakefield Council. He is also current President of the Association of Directors of Public Health.

6. Cancer Research UK is the world’s leading cancer charity dedicated to saving lives through research. For further information about Cancer Research UK’s work or to find out how to support the charity, please call 0300 123 1022 or visit www.cancerresearchuk.org. Follow us on Twitter and Facebook.

7. The 16 types of cancer associated with smoking (source: the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC))

   i. Oral cavity
   ii. Nasal cavity and paranasal sinuses
   iii. Pharynx
   iv. Larynx
   v. Oesophagus
   vi. Lung
   vii. Stomach
   viii. Liver
   ix. Pancreas
   x. Kidney
   xi. Ureter
   xii. Bladder
   xiii. Ovary
   xiv. Cervix
   xv. Colorectal (bowel)
   xvi. Myeloid leukaemia

Cancers are caused by mutations in DNA, which are acquired during a person's lifetime. Lung cancer causes around one million deaths worldwide each year and almost all are associated with smoking. The number of mutations found in the genome of the lung cancer cells - almost 23 000 - suggest that a typical smoker would acquire one mutation per 15 cigarettes smoked - Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute http://www.wellcome.ac.uk/News/2010/News/WTX058965.htm

8. Smoking costs society in Yorkshire and the Humber £1.5 billion a year. This includes costs to the NHS of approximately £223.3 million and an estimated £117.4 million in care costs for current or former smokers with smoking-related illness.