

Please ask Allen Williams  
for:  
Direct Dial 01463 703096  
Your Ref:  
Our Ref:  
Date:

Dear Colleague

Please find enclosed a copy of the Highland Council's revised smoking policy which will operate from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2006. The policy is entitled "Managing Smoking at Work" and incorporates the following major changes from the original smoking policy.

- a. A complete ban on smoking in Council premises and vehicles
- b. Smoking rooms will no longer be available
- c. There will be no smoking breaks as smoking will only be permitted outwith contractual working hours.
- d. Employees will not be permitted to smoke at entrance doorways and approaches to Highland Council premises.
- e. Signage will be provided at entrances to, and throughout Council premises indicating that smoking is not permitted.
- f. There will be an increased emphasis on smoking cessation support.

### **Smoking Cessation**

The Council has agreed to offer financial support to employees who wish to give up smoking as a result of the introduction of the new policy. The Council will therefore pay 50% of the cessation support costs subject to a maximum payment of £50 per employee.

The following smoking cessation methods are currently available in the Highlands and information is supplied in respect of the service provider and estimated costs.

#### **a) NHS Highland Smoking Cessation Service**

The NHS has specialist smoking cessation advisers based in Caithness, Ross-shire, Inverness and Lochaber. They provide smokers with one to one, and in some areas, group support to quit, including the use of Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT).

Individuals are assessed on the basis of their smoking habits and appropriate levels of NRT are then offered as a prescription. An initial prescription for one week's supply is offered together with ongoing support over the following timescale:-

- If the person has refrained from smoking for a week, then a further two weeks NRT is supplied
- If the person has still refrained from smoking for this additional two week period then a further four weeks NRT is supplied.

If the individual is required to pay prescription charges then the cost for seven weeks supply of NRT would be £19.20. NRT products are available to purchase over the counter at most pharmacists at an average cost of £17 per one week's supply. An individual opting for the NHS supported method could therefore save approximately £100 over a seven week period on the cost of NRT products.

#### b) **Allen Carr Counselling Method**

This method of smoking cessation involves the individual or group attending a series of three counselling sessions during which the psychology of smoking is addressed. This method has been piloted and adopted by several large organisations including The Scottish Executive, the Scottish Parliament and Glasgow and Dundee City Councils.

The company offer a money back guarantee if an individual has failed to stop smoking after three months subject to the person having attended all three sessions.

The total cost of treatment session is £210 per person plus VAT.

#### c) **Hypnotherapy**

Several hypnotherapists operate throughout the Highland Council Area and offer smoking cessation support. Hypnotherapy is a natural therapy which uses a combination of skills including counselling, mind analysis and hypnotic techniques.

It is not recognised by NHS Highland however as a medical treatment, therefore referral by GP prescription through NHS smoking cessation is not available. Individuals who choose this method will be expected to pay in the region of £35 per session, with normally three sessions per full treatment. The total cost would therefore be in the region of £105.

#### d) **Acupuncture**

As well as hypnotherapy, acupuncturists operate throughout the Highland Council Area and provide services that are not available through the NHS. The technique can be used to help people stop smoking and an individual is normally required to attend three sessions at a total cost of £100.

**Further information on cessation support service providers in the Highland Area, together with details of how to apply for financial assistance can be obtained by contacting The Health & Safety Team, Dochfour Drive, Inverness, Tel: 01463 703096.**