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Cambridgeshire smokers are being urged to join thousands around the country in stubbing it out for Stoptober.

Stopping smoking is more achievable than ever with this year's Stoptober campaign, which returns for the sixth year on October 1 and is being supported by Cambridgeshire County Council.

Stoptober is the biggest mass quit attempt in the country and is based on research that shows that if you can stop smoking for 28 days, you are five times more likely to quit for good

Public Health England's (PHE) national campaign engages smokers to quit as part of a 28 day challenge and promotes the use of the county's local Stop Smoking Service CAMQUIT alongside the use of nicotine replacement therapy/medicines available on the NHS.

The campaign coincides with new data published in a University College of London (UCL) report which shows the number of people nationally who have quit smoking is at its highest for at least a decade. In Cambridgeshire, 2,253 smokers successfully quit last year with October being the stop smoking service's busiest month.

Success rate of CAMQUIT's stop smoking services have steadily increased in recent years with a 47% success rate in 2013 rising to 53% in 2016.

The Stop Smoking Services offers free one to one personalised Quit plans which includes regular face to face appointments, telephone support sessions and treatment medications on NHS prescription. In 2015, PHE said that "E-cigarettes are significantly less harmful to health than tobacco and have the potential to help smokers quit smoking" and this year's campaign will also be promoting the use of them as an effective tool in the quitting journey.

Val Thomas, Consultant in Public Health at Cambridgeshire County Council, said: "Smoking is the biggest cause of preventable deaths in England so quitting is the single most important step you can take to protect your health. By quitting, you will dramatically reduce your risk of coronary heart disease, stroke and a variety of cancers and you'll feel better – plus you will have more money to spend on other things that you enjoy. If you are a smoker and want support to quit, with Stoptober you won't be on your own. Our CAMQUIT stop smoking service offers specialist advice, support and encouragement to help people stop smoking for good."

A number of events are being held around the county by the CAMQUIT stop smoking team at Everyone Health and

specialist advisors who are also based within local GP practices and pharmacies will be on hand throughout the campaign to support people to quit.

Events taking place for Stoptober in Cambridgeshire:

**Wednesday, September 27** / Golden Age Fair 11am-2pm / Christchurch Community Centre, Upwell Road, Christchurch, PE14 9LL

**Friday, October 6** / Love Your Lung Event / 9.45am-4pm / Tesco Wisbech

**Tuesday, 10 October** / Stoptober promotional event 2-4pm / Tesco March

### The first steps to stopping smoking

- **Step 1:** Think how great you would feel if you stopped smoking for good and what it would be like to wake up every day feeling completely fresh and free, with more energy, more money and more life.
- **Step 2:** Prepare for a better future! Have a plan. Understand why you smoke and what you will do to take your mind off smoking. Get advice about the medication choices or electronic cigarettes and what would be the best option for you and which people are going to support you. Set a date to quit smoking.
- **Step 3:** Quit with the support that's right for you. Professional help can more than double your chances of success
- **Step 4:** Stop for good and stay positive. It can take a few attempts to stop smoking. There are lots of ways to stop smoking and success comes from finding the way that's right for you.

Call CAMQUIT on 0800 018 4304 or to find out more visit [www.camquit.nhs.uk](http://www.camquit.nhs.uk) (<http://www.camquit.nhs.uk>)

Stoptober will also offer a range of free support to help you including an app, daily emails, Facebook Messenger and lots of encouragement from the Stoptober online community on Facebook.



