**News Release 21.06.2023**

**Second Southampton GP Practice paves the way to help make England smokefree by 2030**

Two Southampton Primary Care Networks (PCNs) are paving the way for GPs, pharmacies and health organisations to become smokefree by signing up to the NHS Smokefree Pledge.

The pledge, which was developed by Action on Smoking and Health (ASH), is designed to be a clear and visible way for NHS organisations to show their commitment and reaffirm their support for a smoke free NHS. Health settings that sign the pledge also commit to creating an environment to help smokers on their stop smoking journey.

Southampton Woolston & Townhill PCN joins Southampton Central PCN as the second PCN in the country to sign the NHS Smokefree Pledge, joining the many NHS hospital trusts across the country who are already signatories.

By signing up to the pledge, the team at Southampton Woolston & Townhill are committing to:

* Treat tobacco dependency among patients and staff who smoke
* Ensure smokers within the NHS have access to the medication they need to quit
* Create environments that support quitting through implementing smokefree policies

Dr Karen Malone, Clinical Director at Southampton Woolston & Townhill PCN, said:

Insert quote

Dr Debbie Chase, Director of Public Health said:

“I’m so pleased the Woolston & Townhill PCN has joined our Central PCN in signing the NHS Pledge and that they’re being recognised for such fantastic work. We are working with primary care services across Southampton to make it as easy as possible to get help to stop smoking and we are proud to have signed the similar Local Government Declaration on tobacco control.”

Councillor Lorna Fielker, Cabinet Member for Health, Adults and Housing, said

“By signing up to the pledge, local organisations are able to establish new ways of making a positive difference, helping to give our residents the best chance of quitting smoking. I have first-hand experience of using local stop smoking support services via my GP; the help and support available is brilliant and I’m pleased to say I have not smoked since!”

Hazel Cheeseman, Deputy Chief Executive at Action on Smoking and Health (ASH):

“Primary Care has an essential role to play in supporting implementation of effective tobacco dependency treatment across the NHS. We are delighted to now have two Primary Care Networks in Southampton championing this work through signing the NHS Smokefree Pledge. We hope their commitment to this important work encourages Primary Care Networks across the country to do the same.”

There are many benefits to stopping smoking. It will help you to breathe more easily, feel more refreshed and active, and save money.

Support is available to help people in the city to stop smoking in addition to the support from GP practices, including participating local pharmacies, the free Smokefree National Helpline on 0300 123 1044 and the NHS Quit Smoking app.

More information can be found on the Southampton City Council website here: <https://www.southampton.gov.uk/health-social-care/health/stopping-smoking/>

**Notes to editors:**

* In Southampton we believe around one in eight adults smoke.
* Smoking is the leading cause of preventable death and disease in the UK. 78,000 people die in the UK every year from smoking and half of smokers die from smoking-related illnesses years before ex or non-smokers.
* The national strategy aim for Smokefree 2030 refers to less than 5% smoking prevalence by 2030 - <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-9655/>
* Southampton Woolston & Townhill PCN consists of four surgeries including Woolston Lodge Surgery, Old Fire Station Surgery, Townhill Surgery and St Peter’s Surgery.
* Southampton Central PCN consists of a number of GP practices across the city centre and Portswood areas. These are St Mary’s Surgery, Solent GP Surgery (and the homeless healthcare team), Mulberry Surgery, and Alma Road Medical Centre.
* For more information about the NHS Smokefree Pledge, visit: <https://ash.org.uk/resources/smokefree-nhs/the-nhs-smokefree-pledge>