



Smoking & Poverty

John Watson/Zareen Iqbal
ASH Scotland, June 2019

“smoking and poverty”

A very apt topic for this joint meeting:

- smoking is the biggest cause of poor lung health
- smoking is largely determined by social and economic circumstance, not choice, so inequality is the biggest issue with regard to smoking

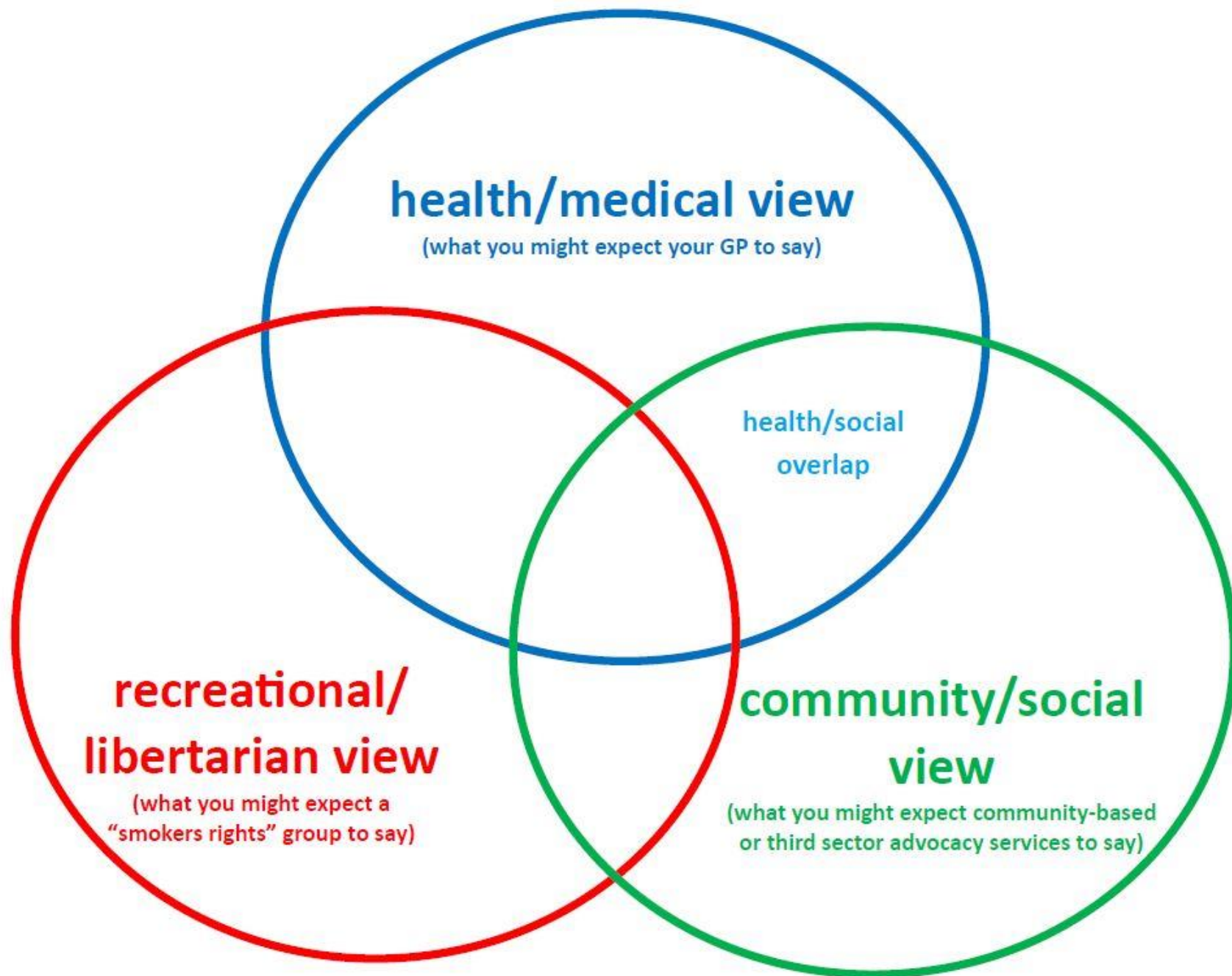
“smoking and poverty”

- most people who smoke say that they want to quit. We are trying to help them achieve their goal, not force them to do anything they don't want to
- the harm from smoking falls most heavily on disadvantaged groups (poverty, disability, mental health)
- but there is very little collaboration between public health and anti-poverty groups, despite our shared interest in improving people's well-being

We need to talk.....

- engaged anti-poverty groups
- found good awareness of the harm caused by smoking, but also strong views on why people smoke and what benefits they seek from it
- worryingly, a deep disconnect with public health messaging, and scepticism about our motives, solutions and understanding of people's lives





Smoking and Money Advice Project(SMAP)

ASH Scotland pursued funding to support the recommendations of this report and devised the SMAP project which had the following aims:

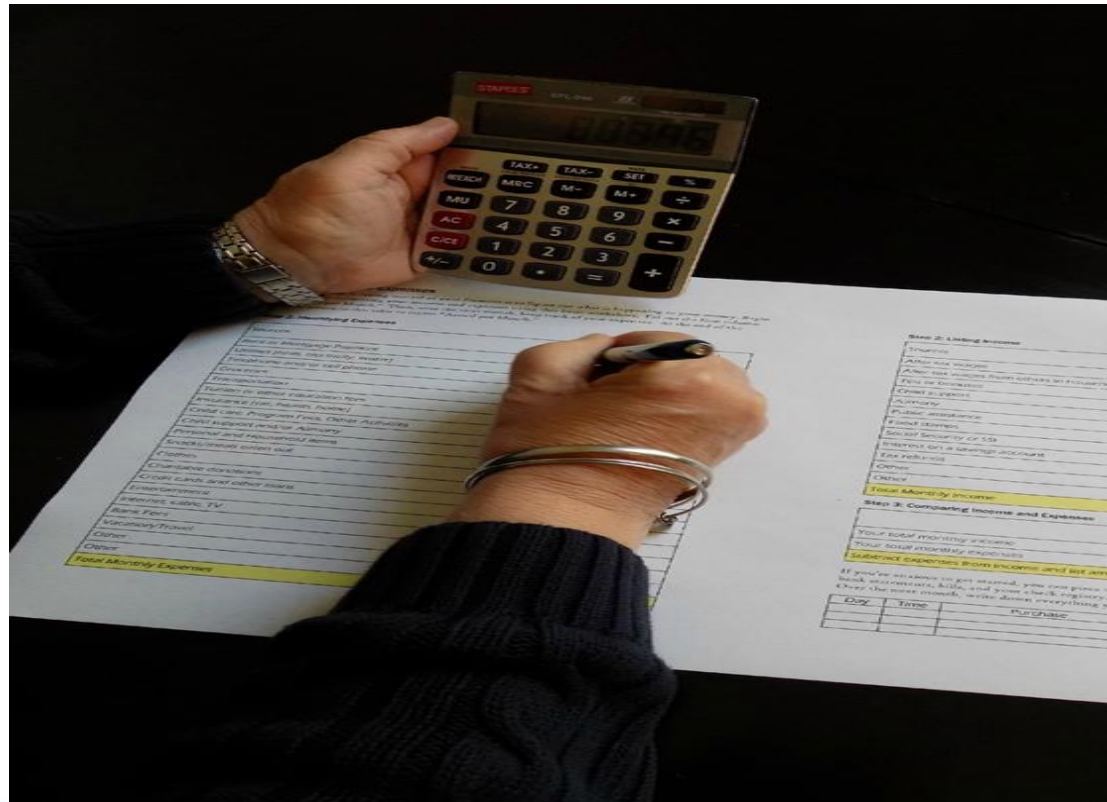
- 1) To raise awareness of the findings of the original partnership programme
- 2) To devise and trial a resource to support money advice settings to signpost to stop smoking services
- 3) To encourage partnership working between local SSS and money advice organisations
- 4) To provide an outline training resource as an alternative to SSS training for money advice services.

Tobacconomics – the cost of smoking

- Buying 20 cigarettes (£8.50) a day from a shop will cost £250 a month, £3000 a year.
- 27% of those people in the lowest SIMD groups compared to 9% of people in the most affluent areas are smokers.
- Nearly half of those who are out of work and seeking employment or living with a long-term disability are smokers.
- Aside from the health and social harm caused by smoking, in Scotland smoking takes nearly half a billion pounds from people in disadvantaged groups, who want to quit every year.



How Can We Support Advice Staff to raise smoking with clients



Coping and Richer Resources

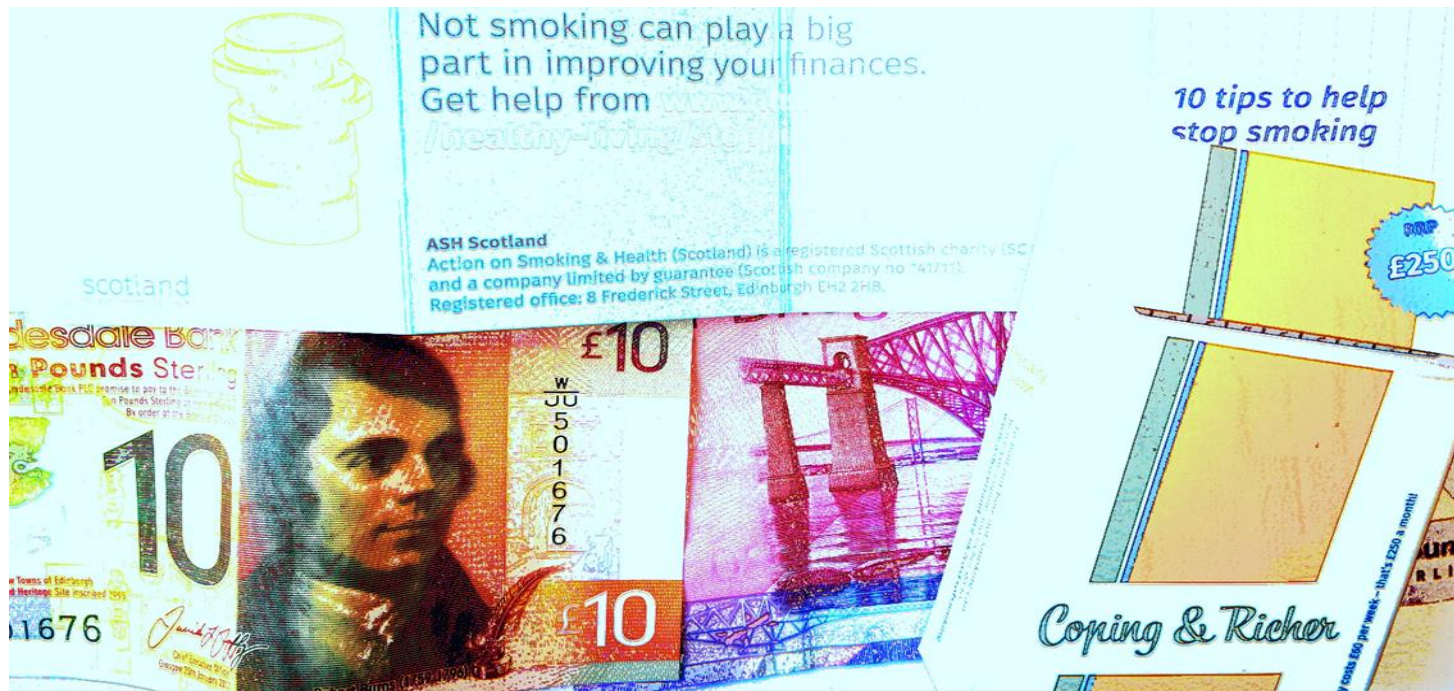


- The '10 tips to help stop smoking' cards are housed in an eye catching cigarette box and keeping this on your desk could spark a conversation with a client.
- The accompanying poster is designed for display in waiting areas or consultation rooms to encourage clients to start thinking about the link between smoking and finances.

Raising the issue of smoking and finances(Contd)

- When dealing with money advice and debt focused issues Advice Workers may generally be looking at supporting clients to examine their income and expenditure and to identify ways in which they can effectively manage and control their financial circumstances.
- SMAP E-Learning module.





Helping people to cope and be richer: report on the ASH Scotland Smoking and Money Advice Project

Key Findings

- Different approaches to raising tobacco issues amongst participating organisations but most felt that it should be raised.
- Resources helped generate comments regarding smoking during client meetings and became a non-intrusive way of being able to pass on advice and signpost smokers to stop smoking support.
- Training helped staff to see how smoking could be fitted in to work objectives and increased confidence in raising the issue more consistently with clients.
- Positive changes in health behaviours ie clients/staff cutting down, quitting, vaping and taking smoking outside the home
- Changes to service delivery, to help raise tobacco issues consistently.

Case Study-Edinburgh Advice Shop



Background

The Edinburgh Council Advice Shop provides a range of welfare rights and debt advice to help people maximise their income and deal with money problems.

Since introducing our money advice resources to the service in June 2018 within 3 months:

- Staff spoke to at least one client every week about tobacco issues if not more and signposted some to services.
- 20 people took away an information card on stopping smoking support, and many were keen to look at accessing further information.
- 4 out of 6 Debt Advisers who were involved in looking at budget management with clients, discussed tobacco issues with them if they mentioned their smoking costs were high. It was explained how much more money they would have left at the end of the month if they did not smoke.
- Where a debt repayment plan was completed to be sent to creditors, there was discussion with clients about tobacco costs if they were too high, as the creditors would question this. People at this point were offered an information card to start considering stopping smoking.

For Further Information:

- Find out more about our work in this area of inequalities by viewing [Smoking and Money Advice Project](#) on our website page.
- To access our free 'Smoking & Money Advice E-Learning module' visit our E-Learning [website](#).
- For more information on getting involved in this area of work or to request resource materials for money advice organisations please email enquiries@ashscotland.org.uk or phone 0131 220 9475.

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Taking Action on Smoking and Health

