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Mouth Cancer

As November is **Mouth Cancer Action Month**, we should encourage everyone to look in their mouths and raise any concerns with their dentist or GP.

What is mouth cancer?

Mouth cancer (also called oral cancer) can affect any part of the mouth, including the gums, tongue, inside the cheeks or the lips. Although anyone can get mouth cancer, the risk increases with age and most people are diagnosed between the ages of 66 and 70. How serious it is depends on the type of mouth cancer, how big it is, if it has spread and the patient's general health.

Although it is not always clear what causes mouth cancer, there is more chance of getting mouth cancer by:

- Smoking or chewing tobacco, betel nut or paan
- Drinking lots of alcohol
- Having leukoplakia
- Overexposure to sunlight or sunbeds – this can cause skin cancer affecting the lips
- Having had cancer before
- Having a weakened immune system or taking immunosuppressant medications.

Symptoms of mouth cancer

- A mouth ulcer that lasts longer than 3 weeks
- A red or white patch inside your mouth
- A lump inside your mouth or on your lip
- Pain inside your mouth
- Difficulty swallowing
- Difficulty speaking or a hoarse voice
- A lump in your neck or throat
- Unintentional weight loss

These symptoms are common and can be caused by other conditions and any symptoms should be checked promptly by a GP or dentist.

Mouth cancer can affect anyone

Mouth cancer had a huge impact on Jim Ritchie's life, but an early diagnosis and successful treatment meant it wasn't all negative.



Jim is keen to help others by raising awareness of signs and symptoms to prevent others suffering from the disease. Scan here to listen to Jim's story.



Scan me!

If you are concerned about mouth cancer speak to your local GP or dentist. Visit www.mouthcancer.org

For further information download our dental App and visit www.mouthcancer.org

EAST AYRSHIRE
Health & Social Care
Partnership



Keep up-to-date with the Oral Health Improvement Team

 @AyrshireandArranOHI

 @NH5OHI

 @nhsaaohi

 nhsaaa.net/better-health



NES Webinar: Cancer Care for Pharmacy Teams - Tuesday 28 October

Our colleagues at NES are running a webinar looking at Cancer Care for Pharmacy Teams on Tuesday 28th October at 19:30 to 21:00.

The webinar is intended for all pharmacy team members, especially those in primary care and community pharmacy.

Booking is available via TURAS Learn: [Cancer Care for Pharmacy Teams | Turas | Learn](#)

Course Overview

This webinar is for all pharmacy professionals, offering a comprehensive overview of the pharmacy team's role in cancer care. From prevention and early detection to treatment and managing side effects, this session will equip you with the knowledge and confidence to support patients across the cancer care pathway.

Learning aims:

To enhance the knowledge and confidence of pharmacy teams in supporting people with or at risk of cancer; from prevention and early detection to cancer treatment. The session is intended to promote the role of pharmacy teams in all sectors of care and to identify ways for working more collaboratively.

GPhC Webinar

Webinar on Cannabidiol (CBD) Products and cannabis-based products for medicinal use Monday 3 November 2025, 19:30-20:30

Join the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) and Food Standards Agency (FSA) for a webinar focusing on Cannabidiol (CBD) Products and cannabis-based products for medicinal use.

Book your place now

The webinar will:

- Share key findings from a GPhC [review of registered pharmacies identified as providing cannabis-based products for medicinal use as a key service](#), areas for improvement and examples of good practice.

Pharmacy Technician day 2025

Happy belated Pharmacy Technician Day to all of our Pharmacy Technician colleagues across Ayrshire!

Pharmacy Technicians play a vital and multifaceted role across a wide range of healthcare settings, contributing significantly to patient care and the safe, effective use of medicines.



RECENT COMMUNICATIONS SUMMARY

Friday 17th October – Kirstie Church – Advisory – Patient Behaviour Alert

Friday 24th October – aacpteam –

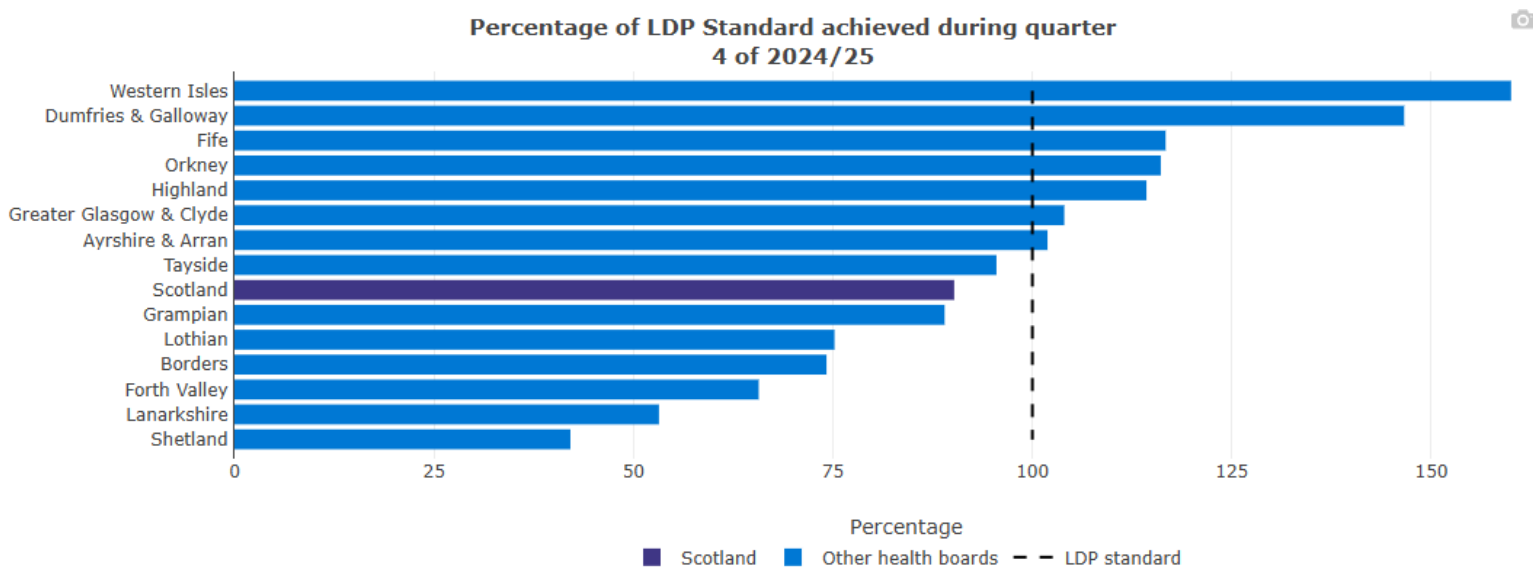
- Drug Alert Class 4 – No 44 2025 – Class 4 Medicines Defect Information – Caution In Use – Relonchem Ltd Various Products
- Drug Alert 45 Class 3 Action Within 5 Days Accord Healthcare Ltd Ipratropium Bromide 500mcg/2ml Nebuliser Solution

Cessation Corner #15

I'm Kerry Ingram and I work for Quit Your Way (QYW) in Ayrshire. QYW Helpline 0800 783 9132. Over the next few issues, I'll be writing about all things smoking-related, with the aim of helping you to better support your smoking cessation patients. If you have any questions, please contact me directly: Kerry.Ingram@aapct.scot.nhs.uk



I want to thank all pharmacy teams across Ayrshire and Arran for your incredible dedication and hard work over the past year. Your continued commitment to supporting people on their quit journey has played a vital role in helping us not only meet—but exceed—the Scottish Government's Quarter 4 target for successful 12-week quits from the 40% most deprived areas (see below). Your efforts are making a real difference in the lives of those who need it most. Thank you for being such a vital part of this success and keep up the good work.



Strengthening Quit Support Through Partnership Working

Over the past year, QYW has worked in close partnership with community pharmacies across Ayrshire to enhance smoking cessation support and improve 12-week quit outcomes. This collaborative effort has delivered a wide range of practical and strategic support, including:

- **Training & Development:** Over **100 pharmacy colleagues** have received training and product guidance, including that to support the recent **Varenicline launch**, with access to dummy starter packs and training.
- **Resources & Equipment:** Pharmacies have been equipped with **NRT samples**, **Varenicline dummy packs**, and ensured access to **working smokerlysers** and necessary supplies to enable their use with patients.
- **Communication & Engagement:** QYW contributes **fortnightly** to the Community Pharmacy newsletter, responds to **ad-hoc queries**, and offers **Shared Care support** for pharmacy patients.
- **Monitoring & Reporting:** Support is provided for **weekly follow-up data collection**, alongside the production of **localised reports** for Pharmacy Leads and Technicians.
- **Collaborative Relationships:** Strong working links have been established with key colleagues including **Alyson Stein**, **Alan McGeer**, **Kirstie Church**, **Lorraine Tait**, and **Laura Mercer** — ensuring a joined-up approach to patient care. This extends to encompass all pharmacy staff across Ayrshire.

This partnership continues to strengthen the delivery of smoking cessation services in our communities, and QYW remains committed to supporting pharmacy teams in achieving the best possible outcomes for patients.

Hints & Tips

QUIT SMOKING START HEALING

The benefits of quitting smoking



Plan Ahead with Your Patient

Help them choose a quit date and discuss what support they'll need. Planning builds confidence and sets clear expectations.

First Appointment

Ideally give the patient access to Varenicline or NRT on their first appointment with you when they are highly motivated.

Ask Lots of Questions

Explore the patient's smoking habits, triggers, and previous quit attempts. The more you understand, the better you can tailor your support.

Use NRT/Varenicline — But Focus on Behavioural Support

NRT & Varenicline are helpful tools, but **regular, supportive conversations** are what make the biggest difference. Encourage patients to talk about their challenges and successes. Make sure you stick to the formulary products.

Handle Difficult Conversations with Care

Some patients may be resistant, frustrated, or ambivalent. Stay calm, listen actively, and avoid judgement. Reassure them that quitting is a journey and you're there to support them, no matter how long it takes.

Collect Full Patient Details

Always record a **contact number** — it's vital for follow-ups and ensures continuity of care. It also means you won't miss on payments if you can show you've tried to contact a patient for their follow-up.

Schedule Follow-Ups on a Set Day

Choose a consistent day each week for follow-ups. This helps avoid missed reviews and ensures you receive payment for completed support. A 4-week follow-up only has a 2-week window to collect an update. After this point, the 12-week follow-up window **WILL NOT** open.

Use QYW for Training & Support

We offer training on products, behavioural techniques, and service delivery. Reach out to QYW — we're here to help you feel confident and supported. Don't forget we can also offer **Shared Care**. Meaning your patient can ask for and receive additional behavioural support from QYW. Contact us to arrange and make sure you tick "Shared Care".

KEY COMMUNITY PHARMACY CONTACTS

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PRIMARY CARE CONTACTS

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GENERAL ENQUIRIES EMAIL: aa.cpteam@aapct.scot.nhs.uk

Information contained in this communication is issued on the understanding that it is the best available from the resources at our disposal and the opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect Ayrshire & Arran Patient Services' policy.