



Employee Access to Nicotine Replacement Therapy Procedure

1. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Smoke Free WA Health System Policy aims to minimise the exposure of employees, consumers and visitors to Environmental Tobacco Smoke (ETS) across all Department of Health premises. (1)

All WA Health owned and leased premises and ground including hospitals, community health centres, office buildings, car parks and vehicles are smoke free. All WA Country Health Service (WACHS) staff who wish to quit smoking or manage their nicotine dependence whilst at work will be provided with two courses of eight weeks nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) free of charge. There must be a minimum of one month between each eight week course of NRT provided.

Staff will be able to access the two courses of eight weeks free NRT **once only** during their employment with the Health Service.

This procedure describes the process for supporting WACHS staff to quit smoking or manage their nicotine dependence while in a smoke free work setting.

2. PROCEDURE

To be read in conjunction with *Employee Access to Nicotine Replacement Therapy Flow Chart* ([Appendix 1](#)).

2.1 Employee Procedure

- Complete and sign the [Employee Application for Nicotine Replacement Therapy Form](#).
- Contact your line manager to sign the form and produce a copy of a Medical Certificate, if required.
- Submit the form via fax or in person to your Regional Pharmacy to receive your first four weeks of free NRT.
- At the beginning of your third week of NRT, contact your Regional Pharmacy for the remaining four weeks of free NRT.
- To access your second eight week course of free NRT you will need to complete another *Employee Access to Nicotine Replacement Therapy Form* and indicate on the form in the space provided that you have already received your first eight week course. There must be a minimum of one month between each eight week course of NRT.

2.2 Line Manager Procedure

- Complete and sign the 'To be Completed by Manager' section of the Employee Access to Nicotine Replacement Therapy form.
- Keep a copy of form (and medical certificate if required) in employee health records.

2.3 Pharmacy Procedure

- Dispense NRT (only in the form of patches / lozenge or gum) to employees after receiving a completed Employee Application for Nicotine Replacement Therapy form.
- Use standard pharmacy protocol to send NRT to employee, or employee to collect requested NRT from nominated pharmacy.
- Complete the 'To be Completed by Pharmacy' section of the Employee Application for Nicotine Replacement form.
- Send the completed form to the employee's line manager when you have supplied the **final four weeks of NRT**.
- Follow the above procedure for the dispensing of an employee's second eight week course ensuring there is a minimum of one month between each eight week course.

2.4 WACHS Central Office

- WACHS Central Office staff have access to patches only from the Staff Occupational Health Unit at Royal Perth Hospital (Level 3, Ferguson Block, Wellington Street).

3. DEFINITIONS

Second Hand Smoke Exposure	is the breathing in of another person's smoke which may come directly in a stream from a nearby cigarette, or indirectly from a build-up of smoke in the air.
Health Service Sites	includes all buildings, grounds and outdoor environments within and through which services are accessed, planned and provided. This includes sites where WACHS business is carried out even if that site or building is not owned by WACHS.
Nicotine Replacement Therapy	Pharmacotherapies designed to alleviate nicotine withdrawal. Include nicotine patches, lozenge, microtab, gum and inhaler.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

See Smoke Free WA Health System Policy Implementation Procedure.

5. EVALUATION

The Senior Population Health Program Officer will report annually to the WACHS Leadership Team:

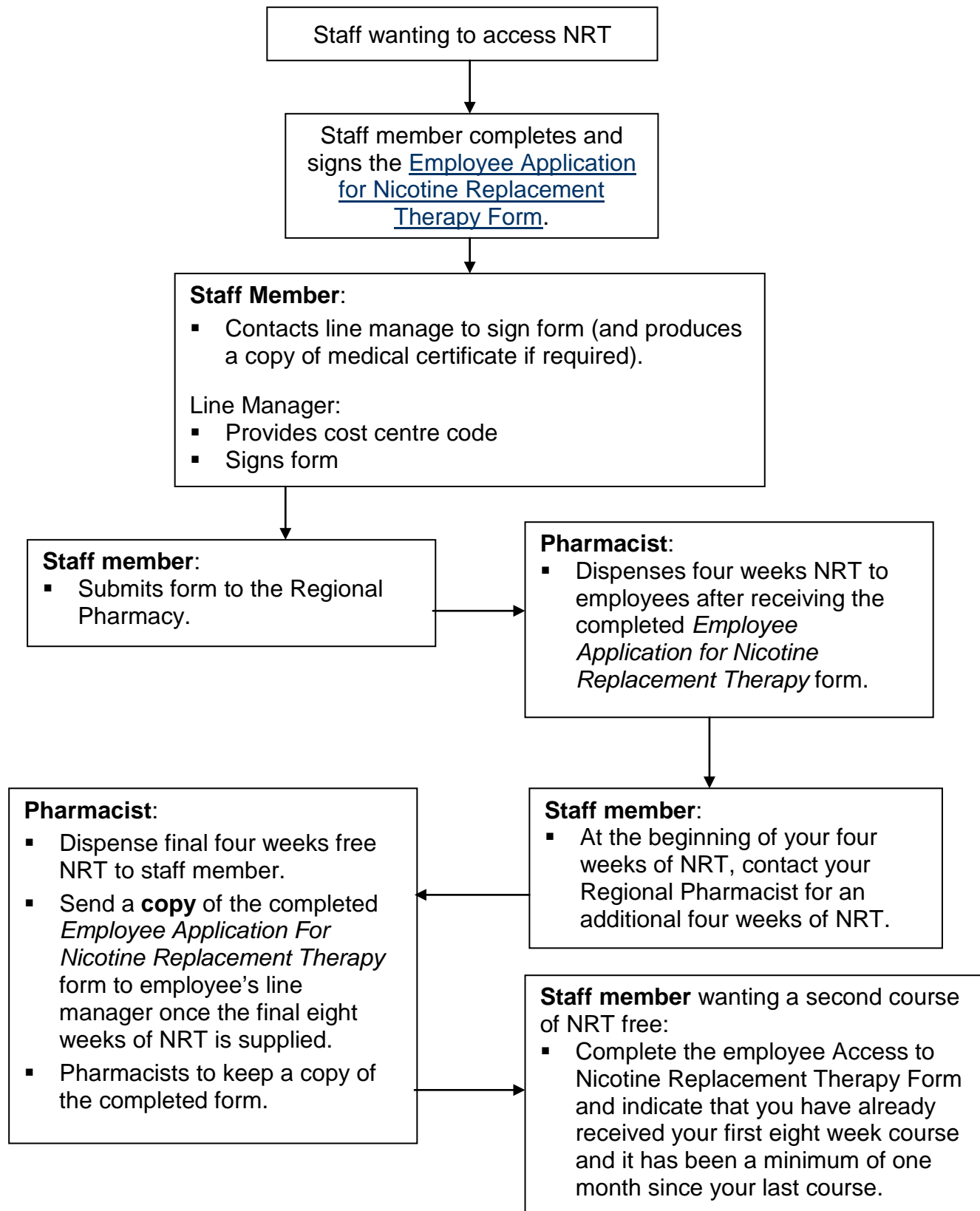
- The number of employees accessing nicotine replacement therapy, which will be obtained from Regional Pharmacy records.

6. REFERENCES

Department of Health, Western Australia. [Smoke Free WA Health System Policy Operational Directive OD 0414/13](#) 2013.

APPENDIX 1

Employee access to Nicotine Replacement Therapy



APPENDIX 2

Nicotine Replacement Therapy

Information for Employees

Please read the following information and complete the *Employee Application for Nicotine Replacement Therapy* form (attached).

What is NRT and how can NRT help you quit smoking?

Nicotine is the powerfully addictive drug in cigarettes your body becomes addicted to over time. When you stop smoking you may experience symptoms from nicotine withdrawal – cravings, feeling anxious, hungry and cranky. Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) can help relieve these symptoms provided the smoker uses an adequate dose over time. There is evidence that NRT products are a very effective aid to quitting, more than doubling the chances of a successful quit attempt.

What else will increase your chances of a successful quit attempt?

To have the best chance possible of succeeding, it is important to do the things that are known to be effective. Using the Quitline is one such thing, as it provides access to advice and support. Quitline counsellors are experts in helping people to quit and providing advice about NRT. Using the Quitline will double the chances of success. Phone: 137 848.

Do you have any contraindications (or special conditions) that need to be considered before you start on a course of NRT patches?

NRT is safe for most people to use, although some people may have special conditions that should be considered before NRT is taken.

If you have any of the special conditions listed on the *Employee Application for Nicotine Replacement Therapy* form, you will need to seek advice from your doctor or General Practitioner regarding the use of NRT and present a medical certificate indicating that NRT is safe and appropriate management for you before NRT can be issued. If this is the case, a copy of the medical certificate is to be attached to this form.

You will also be required to read the Consumer Medication Information in order to ensure that it is safe for you to receive NRT.

Quit Tips

1. Set a Quit Date

Now you have decided to quit, apply for the eight weeks of subsidised NRT patches and contact Quitline on 13 7848 and/or Quit Online at www.quitnow.info.au. Get a diary or notebook to record your progress.

2. Understand Your Addiction

Nicotine is a stimulant that your body becomes addicted to over time. When you stop smoking you may experience symptoms of withdrawal from nicotine – cravings, feeling anxious, hungry and cranky. Nicotine Replacement Therapy can help with these symptoms.

3. Identify Your Smoking Pattern/Habit

When do you smoke the most? Make notes about situations that make you feel like a cigarette and plan other things to do instead of smoking. Example – if you always have a cigarette with morning tea, take a short walk and drink water.

4. Change Your Habit

Don't go to the usual places at the usual time when you used to smoke there.

5. Get Support

Tell your family and friends. Often it's the encouragement and support from those around you that will give you the extra motivation to stick with it.

6. Call the Quitline or Go Online

If you feel like you may lapse – call them for support and advice. Quitline 137 848 Quit Online www.quitnow.info.au.

What to do if you feel you are suffering nicotine withdrawal symptoms?

Some individuals may be highly dependent on nicotine and suffer from nicotine withdrawal symptoms, even though they are using a patch. If you feel you are suffering from any of the nicotine withdrawal symptoms listed below, you may need combination therapy, such as using gum or lozenge or double patching. This is at your discretion, and it is recommended that you seek advice from your medical practitioner.

Symptoms of nicotine withdrawal

Withdrawal from nicotine consists of the presence of cravings to smoke plus four or more of the following symptoms. If you continue to have these symptoms while on the patch, chances are you are not getting enough nicotine.

Symptoms include anxiety, irritability, frustration or anger, depressed mood, increased appetite, restlessness, difficulty concentrating, insomnia or decreased heart rate.

**This document can be made available in alternative formats
on request for a person with a disability**

Contact:	A/Area Director Population Health (K.Cross)		
Directorate:	Population Health	TRIM Record #	ED-CO-14-627
Version:	3.00	Date Published:	3 September 2015