## Summary

Smoking is harmful to our health. It causes cancer, lung disease and heart disease. People with mental health problems die 15 to 20 years earlier than others in the UK. The main reason for this is smoking.

Quitting smoking is the single most important way to improve your health and wellbeing.

Using smoking cessation medication such as nicotine replacement therapy, and behavioural support, is the best way to quit smoking.

Some people have found that e-cigarettes help them cut down or quit smoking. This leaflet has information about how to use e-cigarettes safely.

For more information, please speak to staff in your care team and ask for a referral to the smoking cessation advisor.
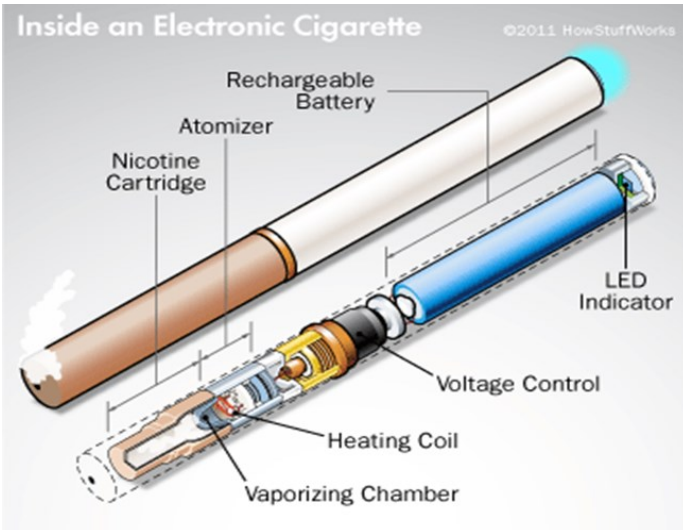
Why are we smoke free?

Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust has a duty to promote health and wellbeing.

Smoking is the biggest cause of preventable disease and early death.

We also have to comply with the Health Act (2006) and with NICE guidance on smoking (2013).

Our staff have been trained to deliver the best treatments for managing nicotine dependence.

Being smoke free means all patients benefit from improved health and wellbeing.

Anyone who stops smoking might find their medication works better and they can reduce their dose.

Ask if you need a large print, audio, Braille or translated version of this leaflet.

Stop smoking support

Safer vaping

merseycare.nhs.uk

E-cigarettes

E-cigarettes have three main parts:

- A cartridge to hold e-liquid
- An atomiser to vaporise e-liquid and
- A battery to power the device

Some have a built-in battery. Others include a separate re-chargeable battery.

Good quality e-cigarettes are usually switched on by pushing the on button a few times. This helps avoid it switching on accidently.

- If your device becomes warm when using it, let it cool or replace the atomiser.
- Replace the atomiser when the e-liquid changes colour, or if you notice a burnt taste from your vapour. Most atomisers need to be replaced every two to four weeks.

E-liquid

E-Liquid usually contains nicotine which can be poisonous if you have too much. So:

- If e-liquid gets in your mouth, spit it out and rinse your mouth with water.
- If a child swallows e-liquid, encourage them to spit it out and seek medical advice immediately - you can call the NHS helpline on 111.
- If e-liquid gets on your skin, wipe it off and wash with soapy water.

Only buy legitimate e-liquid as the ingredients are regulated and monitored.

Store e-liquid in a cool dark place.

Dispose of empty bottles safely.

Batteries

E-cigarettes use lithium batteries which are very powerful and can explode or short-circuit if they are mistreated or damaged. So:

- Replace the battery if the plastic coating is damaged.
- Regularly replace the batteries with the correct one for your e-cigarette.
- Use good-quality batteries with a built-in circuit for extra safety.
- Turn the battery off when you are not using your e-cigarette.
- Avoid attaching the battery too tightly.

Charging

Although rare, fires and explosions can occur when e-cigarettes are charging. So:

- Only use the charger that comes with your e-cigarette or battery - other chargers can be a fire risk.
- If you buy an e-cigarette with a built-in battery make sure its is CE marked and has features to prevent overcharging.
- Charge batteries on a hard surface and away from anything flammable.
- Unplug when the battery has powered up, and don't leave it charging overnight.
- Do not expose your battery to extreme heat, extreme cold, direct sunlight or water.
- Avoid charging where water or other liquids spills are likely.

Carrying your e-cigarette

Loose batteries and e-cigarettes can short-circuit and burn or explode if they come into contact with metal objects. So:

- Never carry loose batteries or e-cigarettes in your pocket or bag with loose change, keys or other metallic objects.
- Always keep spare batteries in a plastic case.
- Switch off your e-cigarette when you are carrying it.

In the unlikely event of your e-cigarette getting very hot, sparking, or emitting hot gas, move it away from yourself and others as quickly as possible.

Cleaning your e-cigarette

Clean the e-cigarette cartridge or tank every day or two, depending on how much you use it.

To clean the cartridge separate it from the atomiser and rinse in clear running water.

A rolled up tissue can be used to clean the mouthpiece. Dry the cartridge with kitchen towel or tissue and re-assemble.

Avoid getting water on the atomiser or battery.