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cymru
action on smoking and health

Annual Report
April 2014 - March 2015

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Chair's Introduction



I am proud to say that the last year has seen a number of achievements in the area of tobacco control, with ASH Wales Cymru playing an instrumental role particularly in the area of changing legislation laws to protect young people from the harmful effects of tobacco.

Significant achievements include the upcoming smoking ban in cars carrying children; standardised (plain) packaging; a display ban at point of sale for all retailers and age restrictions for the sale of e-cigarettes to under 18s.

We have led the tobacco control agenda throughout Wales, calling for more smokefree spaces and following our successful campaign for smokefree playgrounds we are now working with partners to look at creating smokefree beaches, university campuses and school gates.

Protecting young people from tobacco smoke remains at the centre of our work and I'm both pleased and proud to see that The Filter project, a world leading initiative, has continued to support young people aged 11-25 from all over Wales with a specific focus on disadvantaged communities. In its third year the project has continued to innovate and develop new ways to engage young people and filter out the myths about smoking. The project is now working towards an exciting future of offering a wide range of services on a commissioning basis both within and outside Wales.

Illegal tobacco is now a very significant problem in Wales, with illicit sales undermining all existing tobacco control measures such as age restrictions, pricing and health warnings. In 2014 ASH Wales Cymru commissioned detailed research into the extent of the problem with data showing that 15% of the tobacco market in Wales is illegal; worryingly this is a far higher figure than in other parts of the UK. We have been campaigning for action to tackle this problem through the development of a public awareness campaign coupled with strong enforcement action.

The use of electronic cigarettes remains an issue of debate in Wales. We at ASH Wales Cymru have been contributing to the discussion by providing evidence and conducting surveys of young people. Our work however remains focused on tobacco control and limiting the damaging effect of tobacco on young people and disadvantaged communities.

I want to thank every member of the ASH Wales Cymru team and all of our partners in Wales who have worked so hard over the last year to achieve so much. ASH Wales Cymru will continue to ensure that tobacco control is at the top of the public health agenda in Wales.

John Griffiths

Chief Executive's Introduction

The last 12 months have been a great year for the team at ASH Wales Cymru. The Filter team have again exceeded expectations and have diversified the range of stop smoking and prevention services for young people aged 11-25. The Filter team have piloted innovative new ideas such as the 'Commit to Quit' project, which has already proved to be successful and the use of new social media platforms such as Snapchat to reach young people in new ways.

With the Big Lottery funding for **The Filter project coming to an end in October 2015**, we have begun developing a comprehensive funding strategy for the organisation to sustain The Filter project and look to diversify ASH Wales' income streams.

Over the last year our **campaigning has led to some significant achievements in tobacco control** policy with the passing of legislation for standard (plain) tobacco packaging and a forthcoming ban on smoking in cars carrying children.

I am proud that ASH Wales Cymru has led the illegal tobacco agenda in Wales and set up a successful multi-agency all-Wales stakeholder group to tackle the problem. Illegal tobacco is undermining all tobacco control measures such as age restrictions and pricing – we will continue to campaign for effective action such as a public awareness campaign to accompany enforcement efforts.

Preparing for the **National Assembly elections in 2016** we have identified **3 key policy priorities** to feed into political party manifestos. These are: **youth stop smoking and prevention services; tackling illegal tobacco and extending smokefree spaces.**

At the end of 2014 we launched our new branding and logo to reflect our changing organisation, we've received positive feedback for our new look and vision for a smokefree Wales.

We have continued to conduct a valuable research partnership with DECIPHer at Cardiff University looking at the impact of The Filter in Further Education setting through The Filter FE Challenge.

None of this important work would have been possible without our key funders and partners; I would like to say a big thank you to – **The Welsh Government, Big Lottery, Cancer Research UK and the British Heart Foundation.**

Looking to the future we still have a long way to go to reach the Welsh Government's target of 16% smoking prevalence by 2020 but with improved cessation services and enhanced evidence-based tobacco control measures it is ultimately possible to reach ASH Wales Cymru's ambitious target of a smokefree Wales.

Elen de Lacy

Campaigns

ASH Wales Cymru campaigns over the last year have positioned the organisation at the forefront of public health in Wales, leading the agenda on tobacco control.

Our campaigns are all driven by our commitment to achieving a smokefree Wales and to protect young people from the harmful effects of tobacco.



Smoking in cars

Following a final vote on the regulations in Westminster, there will be a ban on smoking in vehicles carrying children in England from October 2015. Following the vote, Welsh Health Minister Mark Drakeford released a statement confirming his intention to implement these regulations in line with England.



The campaign by ASH Wales and partners such as British Lung Foundation has been a huge success and is another milestone to reducing young people's exposure to second-hand smoke, and along with the forthcoming regulations on standardised packaging, the measure will help to de-normalise smoking and discourage children from taking up this deadly addiction.

A final debate on the regulations will take place in the Welsh Assembly in the summer, and if they are approved will come into force alongside England in October 2015.

82% of adults in Wales agree that smoking should be banned in cars carrying children



Standardised (Plain) Packaging

ASH Wales and partners have successfully campaigned for standardised packaging for cigarettes and tobacco products and following support in Parliament and the Welsh Assembly, regulations were passed.

The UK will be following Australia who became the first country in the world to introduce standardised tobacco packaging in December 2012 and tobacco is now sold in plain packs. Evidence shows that it is having a positive impact and reducing smoking prevalence.

Standardised packaging is a major public health success, and discourages many young people from starting to smoke. They will come into force in May 2016.



Imperial Tobacco AGM

In January The Filter team joined young people and campaigners from across the UK, including ASH England and Cut Films, for a noise-making event at the AGM of Imperial Tobacco in Bristol. The aim of the event was to raise awareness of the company's activities in Lao, which include a tax deal which not only deprives the government of millions of pounds of much-needed revenue, but makes cigarettes more accessible to young people. Imperial Tobacco is the fourth largest tobacco company in the world. In the UK it is the market leader in cigarettes, hand-rolling tobacco and rolling papers.

Tobacco Display Ban

Following a successful campaign and the implementation of the tobacco display ban in large shops, which came into force in 2012, the ban will apply to all retailers from April 6th 2015. This ban is a big step forward in reducing the opportunities for marketing that the tobacco industry currently exploit and, coupled with standardised packaging, will hopefully reduce the number of young people taking up smoking each year. Small shops will be required to install doors to cover the tobacco products they sell.



Smokefree Spaces

Following the highly successful and popular smoking ban in enclosed public spaces introduced in 2007, ASH Wales Cymru is campaigning for further smokefree spaces to protect people from the harmful effects of second-hand smoke and to denormalise smoking around young people. We launched our smokefree spaces campaign at the SWALEC Stadium in May 2014.

Playgrounds

20 out of 22

Welsh local authorities
now have
smokefree
playgrounds

This has been a hugely successful campaign and is protecting children using playgrounds across Wales.



Beaches

In 2015, we'll be working with councils to encourage them to make beaches a smokefree family environment, and we will continue to provide support to any organisations or councils wishing to make their attractions, events and spaces smokefree. We have also developed a smokefree beaches tool kit for communities and councils considering making beaches smokefree.

Universities

We have been meeting with universities to review their policies to protect the health of students, staff and visitors and to establish a more socially responsible and ethical standard of conduct. We held a workshop for representatives from universities in South Wales to develop their smokefree campus policies, hear about best practice from Ireland, and move towards being completely smokefree.

We have produced a Smokefree Campuses Guide for anyone who is looking to make their campus smokefree.



Research and Policy

Together with campaigning and working with young people ASH Wales has continued to make a significant contribution to the field of research and has influenced the policy agenda during the past year. We have compiled reports on the progress Wales is making towards becoming a smokefree nation, the awareness/use of e-cigarettes among young people and the size of the illegal tobacco market.



Young people and the use of e-cigarettes in Wales

In a repeat of the survey undertaken last year we surveyed young people aged 13-18 from across the whole of Wales to gain an insight into their awareness and use of electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes). The survey was circulated between November 2014 and January 2015.

Over **90%** reported that they were aware of e-cigarettes

Responses from
952
young people
formed the basis
of the results.

Family and friends represented both a major source of information about e-cigarettes and a frequently reported reason for using them for the first time. Use of e-cigarettes was far more prevalent among respondents who had previously smoked or currently smoke tobacco cigarettes. Of the 608 young people who had never smoked tobacco cigarettes just 9.4% (n = 57) had ever tried an e-cigarette with just over half of these (n = 30) having tried an e-cigarette once and 18 having tried an e-cigarette a few times. Regular use by never smokers was negligible at 0.16% (n = 1). Of those respondents who reported using both e-cigarettes and tobacco cigarettes at some point (n = 84), 98% had first used tobacco cigarettes suggesting the absence of any gateway theory.

Illegal tobacco

We have commissioned the first ever study into the scale and extent of illegal tobacco across Wales through; a Wales-wide survey by NEMS Market Research and an enforcement report. Among the key findings was that the illicit tobacco volume market share is 15%, making Wales one of the highest recorded on any of the regional surveys in England and Wales, on a par with the levels in the North East from 2009.

45%

of smokers in Wales
have been offered
to buy illicit tobacco



1 in 7 smokers are often approached by sellers



Most widely used channels
for illegal tobacco purchases



Private
address

52%



Pub/club

45%



Shops

19%

A quarter of current smokers purchase illicit tobacco, and this makes up an average of around 42% of their total tobacco consumption. Unsurprisingly, the most prevalent channel for illicit purchase was at a private address (52%), followed by a pub/club (45%). There are also notable levels of availability in shops (19%). The average price paid for a single pack of 20 illicit cigarettes is around £4, compared to an RRP of £8.43. The low price of illicit tobacco increases the affordability of the habit for buyers; more than seven out of ten buyers agree strongly that illicit tobacco makes it possible for them to smoke when they could not otherwise afford it.

Across Wales, awareness of illegal tobacco is high, with just under one in five (17%) of non-smokers having come across it. In terms of enforcement the report found a lack of intelligence is a major obstacle. The vast majority of enforcement work in Wales relates to the end supplier and more work is needed to investigate and tackle the chain of supply. The penalties handed out by courts are not strong enough. Higher penalties would help enforcement agencies in their work to reduce the supply of illegal tobacco.



Among the key recommendations of the report is that a 3 year multi agency programme is urgently needed to raise awareness and increase understanding of the impact of illegal tobacco amongst smokers and local communities. This programme would mobilise a range of stakeholders to report illegal trading, and facilitate information sharing between enforcement agencies. A public awareness campaign which reaches all parts of Wales should be funded to generate intelligence and reduce demand for illegal tobacco. An evaluation of this programme is then needed, which should include a follow-up NEMS survey.

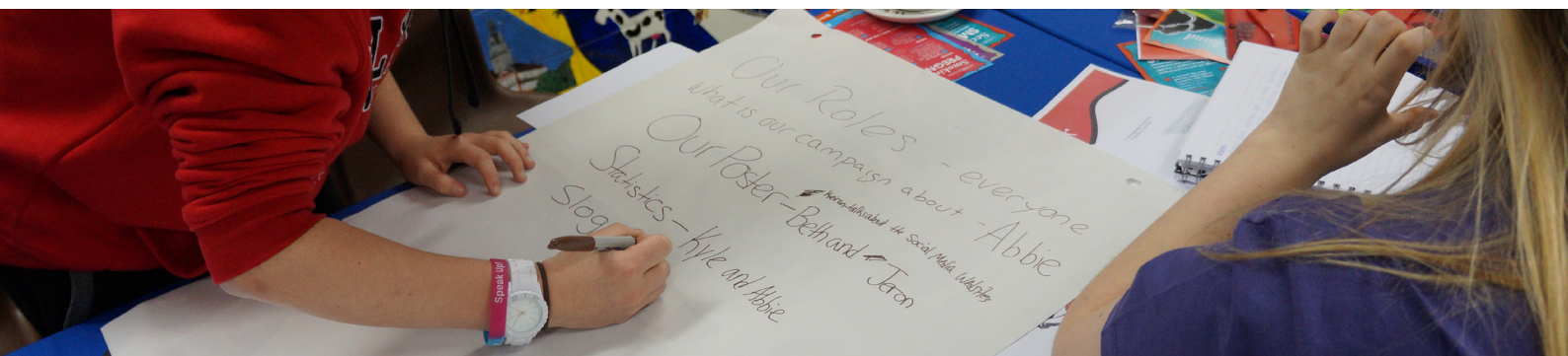
The Filter Youth Development

We have continued to deliver our workshops this year and we have worked with a total of over 5000 young people since the project started in 2012. For 2014/15 we have continued to develop our relationships with youth provisions all over Wales and have increasingly targeted young smokers. We have developed new content which deals with issues that young people are interested in such as electronic cigarettes, shisha, illegal tobacco as well as the co-consumption of tobacco with substances such as cannabis and new psychoactive substances.



Filter Apprentice

The Filter project engaged with four groups of young people from across Rhondda Cynon Taff (RCT) and Merthyr Tydfil to take part in the Filter Apprentice, the groups were a mix of schools and youth organisations. The aim of the residential was to design a smokefree sign and produce a campaign to support it. They were given a range of tasks to help them along the way and each group had their own youth worker to support them throughout the duration of the weekend. Once completed, the groups had to pitch their ideas to the local councillors and leaders. The winning group will have their smokefree design professionally made and put up in 285 areas throughout the counties.



Filter FE Challenge

ASH Wales Cymru is currently involved in an NIHR-funded Stage II feasibility study and pilot trial in FE settings led by DECIPHer at Cardiff University. The aim of the study is to evaluate the feasibility and acceptability of implementing and trialling 'The Filter FE Challenge'. The Filter team have been delivering the project in 3 FE colleges in South Wales and results will be available for this research later in 2015/16.

Stoptober (Snaptober)

To coincide with Stoptober 2014 (an annual event which encourages people to quit smoking for the duration of October), the Filter launched a new campaign 'Snaptober', using popular image-sharing application Snapchat to connect young people with advice and support to help them quit smoking.

Snapchat is very popular among young people (according to statistics from May, its users are sending around 700 million photos and videos every day), so this makes it an ideal way to promote the Stoptober message in a relevant way, sharing tips and providing support.



The 'Snaptober' campaign launched with the Forsythia youth project on The Gurnos estate in Merthyr Tydfil. The group spray painted a Snapchat logo mural on the side of a soon-to-be-demolished building. Young people received tips and advice, each day during October, on topics such as how to cope with cravings and how much money quitting smoking could save.



Volunteering

31 volunteers
have joined us this year



The volunteers have had the opportunity to support our youth development sessions as well as take part in elements of our campaigning work including press interviews. We have supported them with training and personal development opportunities.

Filter the Future 2014

The Filter held its second annual Filter the Future residential event in the University of South Wales in Treforest in July 2014. The residential weekend brought together 60 young people from all over Wales from various youth groups. The weekend consisted of workshops on the tobacco industry, perceptions of young people and an introduction to campaigning. We also had activities in music, break-dancing and t-shirt making. The Saturday night culminated in the Cut Films Awards hosted by T4's Will Best.

CUT Films Awards

In 2014-15 The Filter arranged and promoted the Cut Films Wales awards, in partnership with UK organisers, The Deborah Hutton Campaign. Young people were invited to enter by making a short film or advertisement to discourage their peers from smoking. The winners were invited to a BAFTA-style awards ceremony at the Student Union in the University of South Wales in Treforest. This coincided with our Filter the Future event. Winners included Jo Blake and Kyomi Martin who were both on work experience at Vibe Creative, following their award they both got given full time jobs.

**Cut Films
Competition
now open!**



Filter Events

The Filter has attended approximately 30 events this year mainly at further education colleges across Wales. We also attended the Wakestock festival on the Llyn Peninsular, Pride Cymru in Cardiff and the Royal Welsh show. Around 4000 young people have visited our stalls and took part in carbon monoxide tests and received brief interventions for tobacco smoking.

Training and development

ASH Wales has continued to develop our training for professionals. Our training courses cover topics including helping smokers quit, smoking prevention and emerging issues like shisha and e-cigarettes. Our programme of training can be tailored to groups, or people can join one of our scheduled courses.

Working with partners, Sustrans, British Heart Foundation and Mind, we participated in the Live Well Work Well project funded by the Welsh Government. The project focused on healthy lifestyles and we provided smoking cessation and intervention training in workplaces such as hospitals and universities.

The training and development team are developing an online catalogue of services that are available to partners and businesses on a commissioning basis. Accredited training can be provided as a package or bespoke.

Smokefree hospitals seminar

As part of the live well work well project, ASH Wales brought together Local Health boards from across Wales to discuss the implementation of voluntary smokefree hospital bans. We heard from best practice in Scotland and looked at strategies for implementing a ban in Wales.

Smokefree hospitals seminar

Throughout the year we worked with Welsh universities, to review their policies to protect the health of students, staff and visitors and to establish a more socially responsible and ethical standard of conduct. Our training and development team worked with representatives from universities in South Wales at a workshop, as part of the Live Well, Work Well project, to develop their smokefree campus policies, hear about best practice from Ireland, and move towards being completely smokefree.

We also produced a Smokefree Campuses Guide for anyone who is looking to make their campus smokefree.



We've trained over
600
professionals

Professional Networks

International Tobacco Control Conference

In September, ASH Wales brought together delegates from across the UK and further afield for our sixth annual conference: Tackling Health Inequalities through Tobacco Control.

The conference, held at the Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama, was opened by the Minister for Health and Social Services Professor Mark Drakeford and welcomed international plenary speakers from Belgium, Ireland and Canada. Delegates discussed a number of issues including health inequalities, illegal tobacco, smoking in pregnancy and electronic cigarettes.

The conference was a huge success, exploring and debating many important tobacco control issues. We would like to thank all the delegates, exhibitors and supporters of the conference for a great two days. We hope to see you all at our next conference in 2016.



Wales Tobacco Control Alliance

The WTCA continued to grow its membership and work together on tobacco control in Wales. The alliance has focussed on legislation such as the ban on smoking in cars carrying children and the Public Health Bill.

Wales Tobacco or Health Network

The WTHN, led by ASH Wales, held three successful events over the last 12 months, all enabling health professionals to share their knowledge and experience.

June

We organised Wales' first summit on electronic cigarettes in Swansea.

Dec

We held an event about engaging the third sector in tobacco control.

March

We hosted an event in North Wales on smoking cessation services for young people.

Thanks

We would like to thank all our funders, partners and stakeholders - without you we couldn't do the work we are doing.

Our major funders are the Welsh Government, Cancer Research UK, Big Lottery Fund and British Heart Foundation.

Our partners in the Wales Tobacco Control Alliance, the Wales Tobacco or Health Network, The Smokefree Action Coalition, the ASH Wales Research Sub-Committee and project partners, all work with us to achieve a Wales free from the harm of tobacco.

Also, a big thank you to Jobs Growth Wales and all of our volunteers.

ASH Wales Board

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Hollie Burris - Youth Smoking Cessation Advisor
Marc George - University Placement Volunteer
Charlie Reynolds - Volunteer

Financial Accounts

A copy of the financial accounts is available on request from the ASH Wales office:

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