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MEDIA RELEASE

New support for quitting smoking

New government support for smokers wanting to quit will make it much easier and cheaper for them to access support from their local doctor or other health professional, according to The Quit Group.

Executive Director Helen Glasgow says the move to allow all health professionals with prescribing rights to issue low cost nicotine patches and gum is a major boost for smoking cessation in New Zealand. Ms Glasgow says people calling the free national Quitline pay \$10.00 - \$20.00 a month for nicotine patches and/or gum and the new government initiative means prescribers can now issue the therapy at the same cost.

“Studies show that most smokers want to quit and we know that using nicotine patches and gum can double their chances of quitting.”

The Quit Group administers the Quit Cards programme which gives prescribers access to Quit Cards. Smokers issued with Quit cards take them to their pharmacy and redeem them for low-cost patches and/or gum.

“We are hoping that large numbers of prescribers will take this opportunity to offer advice and support to smokers when they visit health clinics,” Ms Glasgow says.

In another new move, smokers wanting to quit can also now order low cost nicotine patches and gum from The Quit Group’s website at www.quit.org.nz . Smokers can also quit by ringing Quitline on 0800 778 778 for advice and support.

For more information:

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The Quit Group is a charitable trust set up to run quit smoking programmes in New Zealand. We run the free national Quitline 0800 778 778, develop quit smoking media campaigns and produce evidence-based tobacco control facts and figures.