

Stacey decides to stub it out – after 29 years

■ AS part of our I Love Me campaign in conjunction with all of the primary care trusts in Greater Manchester, **HELEN CLIFTON** speaks to a woman who has finally given up smoking after almost three decades



■ INFO BOX
In the last year, TASK (Think Act Stop Kick), HMRPCT's Stop Smoking Service, has helped 2,109 people to stop smoking. Contact the team now on 01706 708000 for advice and support on how you can quit.

■ COSTS:
A smoker of 20 per day will spend:
£31.50 per week
£126.00 per month
£1,512 per year
£15,120 over ten years
£60,480 over 40 years

■ QUITTING TIMELINE
Once you quit smoking, your health recovers quickly.
WITHIN -
– 20 minutes: Circulation improves
– 8 hours: Blood oxygen levels return to normal, lessening the chance of a heart attack
– 24 hours: Carbon monoxide is not detected in the body
– 48 hours: The body is nicotine free
– 72 hours: Breathing becomes easier
– 2-12 weeks: It becomes easier to walk and exercise now
– 3-9 months: Breathing problems start to diminish. Lung efficiency increases by five to ten per cent
– 5 years: The risk of a heart attack is halved compared to that of a smoker
– 10 years: The chance of a heart attack is now the same as someone who has never smoked. The chance of getting lung cancer is now half of that of a smoker.

DESPITE working as a manager in Heywood's stop smoking clinic, Stacey Kiernan still managed to get through up to 20 cigarettes a day.

But after 29 years of smoking, the 44-year-old mum-of-one decided to ask one of her colleagues at the Taylor Street clinic to help her quit.

More than two months ago she started attending stop smoking sessions run by Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale Primary Care Trust (HMRPCT) during her lunch hour – and gave up immediately.

Stacey hasn't touched a cigarette since and says she feels wonderful.

"I am really proud of myself," she says. "29 years is a long time."

"It is wonderful, absolutely wonderful. I don't smell anymore. It's so nice to put on fresh clean clothes that still smell fresh at the end of the day."

Stacey, who started smoking when she was 15, was encouraged to give up by her anti-smoking son Joshua, 17, as well as last year's public smoking ban.

"I didn't really smoke much during the day and during working hours, but I would have one as soon as got in the car home in the evening," she explains.

"I used to have around 10 to 20 a day, and obviously if I went out in the evening I would have more."

"I've not been able to smoke in public places, and my son has been bothering me for months to stop smoking. He's very anti-smoking himself. I suppose it's not the done thing anymore, and people are just more anti-smoking nowadays."

Stacey started attending classes run by Hayley Greenwood, the clinic's Stop Smoking Adviser, from 1.30 to 4.30pm every Tuesday.

And even though she says she received fantastic support from HMRPCT staff, Stacey adds that



CRUSHED: Stacey Kiernan with her stop smoking adviser Hayley Greenwood

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will power is crucial to quitting.

She says: "Hayley has been fantastic – but you have got to want to stop in the first place. I found the clinic really helpful."

"They take you through all your options, and the help and advice is there if you really need it."

Stacey also used nicotine replacement patches and an inhaler designed to suppress cigarette cravings in her bid to quit.

But although she still uses patches, she has

now reduced the dosage levels of her patches from 15mg to 5mg, and is coming to the end of the course.

And, Stacey adds, she didn't find giving up half as tough as she originally thought she would.

"I found it fine. It has been absolutely brilliant. The will power has got to be there, but I have had no problems. People say you get really bad side effects – but I feel really good in myself. It's the best thing I have ever done."

Health pledge starting to make a difference

HEYWOOD, Middleton and Rochdale Primary Care Trust says it has made 'significant improvements' since signing a pledge to improve health a year ago.

As part of the 'Heart of Local Health' scheme, the PCT aimed to begin improving health inequalities within the next three, five and 10 years.

Particular successes

within the first year have been the number of people giving up smoking, with almost 2,200 quitting, and 1,900 people losing weight through the weight management scheme.

Commenting on the year's progress, PCT chair John Pierce said: "Our health pledges are incredibly challenging and the progress made in this first year is an excellent start to achieving

our ultimate goals. "The PCT will remain focused over the next year to ensure we stay on track to achieve our targets by continuing to develop and improve local health services."

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Weather

Saturday

A mainly dry start to the day with variable amounts of cloud and just the odd isolated shower. However, it will turn cloudy with rain later, some heavy. Moderate south-easterly winds. Max temp 21C (70F).

Sunday

It will be an unsettled day with showers or longer spells of rain, some heavy at times with the risk of the odd rumble of thunder. It will be breezy with a moderate variable wind. Max temp 20C (68F).

UK Outlook

Saturday
A band of heavy rain will move in from the south-west to all but northern Scotland by the end of the day. South-western areas will have showers later. Breezy, especially in the south. Max temp 21C (70F).

Sunday
It will be a breezy day across the UK with outbreaks of rain across northern areas. There will be scattered showers across southern areas with a few sunny spells. Fresh variable winds. Max temp 21C (70F).

Information supplied by **MeteoGroup**