



HSE QUIT Campaign Pack – Take Back Control this Quit Month

October 2026

QUIT.ie

Objective:

To motivate people who smoke to 'take back control' by taking the 28-day no smoking challenge this October.

Smoking remains a major public health challenge in Ireland:

- 17% of the population currently smoke.
- Smoking causes more than 4,500 deaths annually in Ireland.
- Progress in reducing smoking prevalence has plateaued since 2019.
- Smoking continues to create a significant burden on healthcare services.

Insight summary

- Most smokers want to quit, but quitting forever feels overwhelming. A 28-day challenge makes the goal feel achievable, helps people overcome the most difficult withdrawal period, and builds confidence through early health gains. Reaching 28 days smoke-free is a key milestone because it significantly increases the likelihood of long-term quitting.
- The first four weeks are the critical period for breaking both the physical nicotine addiction and the behavioural habits associated with smoking.
- People who quit smoking for 28 days are around five times more likely to quit for good.

Strategic approach

- Take Back Control Campaign to feature on TV, Video-on-demand (RTE player etc.), radio, digital audio, search and social.
- Strategic Premier Sports partnership to continue.

Targets or KPIs

- Quit plan sign-ups (web and app)
- Quit phone calls
- Leads on social



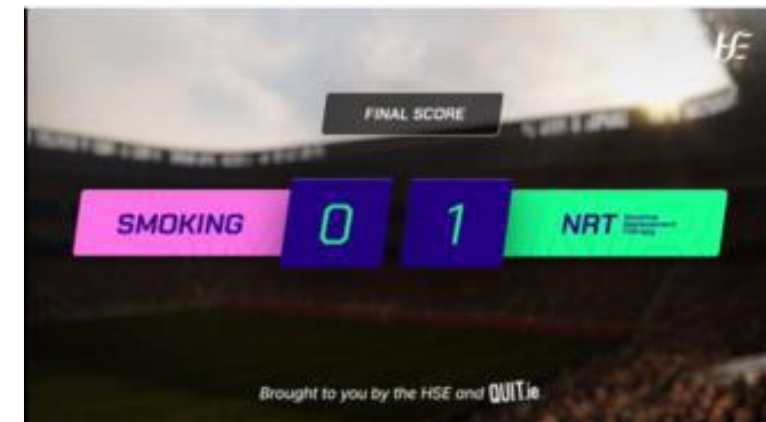
Creative

- **Creative approach: Take Back Control to feature on mass media channels**
- Rationale: People who smoke know that smoking is bad for their health, but often the thought of quitting makes them think about what they might lose. For many, cigarettes feel like a good friend, who helps them socialise and relieves stress and boredom. When they finally take the step to QUIT for good, they see it differently. One of the benefits that people often talk about after quitting is freedom from the control that cigarettes had over them.

‘Once you quit smoking, you realise smoking it’s not the friend you thought it was’.

- **Premier Sports Partnership Creative approach: NRT stings**
- Rationale: Watching live sport can also be stressful so ad breaks become triggers for people to smoke. Over a third of smokers are ‘passionate’ about the Premier League, according to recent HSE research.

Success of the partnership is clear. Current smokers aware of the partnership are 80% likely to consider using QUIT, compared with 47% among those not aware, indicating strong effectiveness in moving smokers closer to help-seeking behaviour.





Media plan

- Media strategy: Use the established Take Back Control platform to deliver broad national reach and maintain consistency with HSE QUIT messaging, which is centred on the achievable goal of quitting for 28 days and regaining control from nicotine addiction.
- Media plan extensions, including the Premier Sports partnership, provide access to audiences that may be less likely to engage with traditional health communications, particularly male smokers and harder-to-reach groups.
- Rationale: By reaching people through sports, the campaign can deliver health messages in a more relevant, trusted context.
- Together, mass reach and targeted partnerships ensure the campaign balances scale and efficiency with audience relevance..

Channels

- TV/AV (includes digital video)
- Radio/digital audio
- Partnerships
- Digital
- Social
- Search



Advertising assets

- **TV** – RTÉ, VMS, TG4, Sky Media, Channel 4/E4 etc. Spot buy on the Traitors. Watch in [English](#) and as [Gaeilge](#).
- **Radio** - Radio ads on national, local and digital audio. Listen to [English](#) agus éist le [Gaeilge](#).
- **Digital audio** - Immersive audio formats for mobile phone listeners including [binaural](#) and dynamic [shake-enabled](#) formats.
- **Video-on demand** – Shorter form videos feature on RTÉ, Channel 4 player, Sky on Demand and YouTube. Watch it in [English](#) and as [Gaeilge](#).
- **Social media** – Messaging and advertising shared across, Facebook and Instagram, Snapchat, Pinterest, Tik Tok.
- **Premier Sports Partnership** - Stings about free NRT feature during coverage of the Premier League and Champions League until the end of the 2026/2027 season.
- **Search and Display** – Always on advertising.
- Posters showing different NRT products can be downloaded [here](#) and can be edited for local use.
- NRT videos can be viewed [here](#).





Social media assets

You can support the campaign by posting/reposting and sharing posts from the HSE on our official accounts.



This October is QUIT month. We've helped thousands of people give up smoking for good. Take the first step by signing up to the [Quit Plan](#) today.



Once you quit smoking, you realise it's not the friend you thought it was. Quit for 28 days and start taking back control. Find out how at [quit.ie](#)



Tried to quit smoking before? Try again this October with free NRT – you're x5 more likely to quit with NRT and support. Find out more at [quit.ie](#).

Right click on image and select 'save as' to save to your computer.



Information materials

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- NRT videos can be viewed [here](#).





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