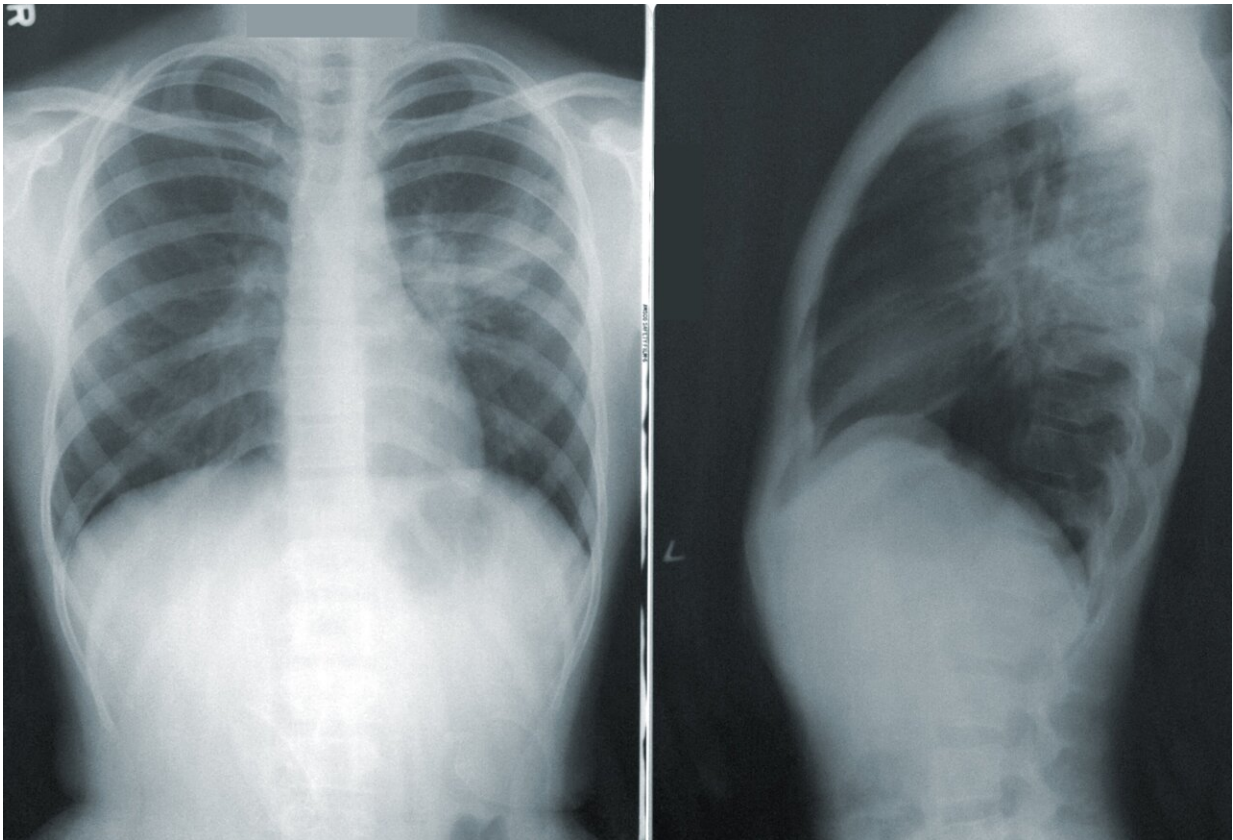


Supporting smokers with new lung health checks could save thousands of lives

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Researchers and national cancer charities strongly welcome the UK Government's decision to back National Screening Committee recommendations for a new national screening program for lung cancer

with smoking cessation support as "integral."

Researchers at the University of Nottingham tested integrated [smoking](#) cessation support for people receiving [lung cancer screening](#). Over 80% of individuals reporting current smoking at the time of attending for [screening](#) accepted an offer of stop smoking support and over 30% of these reported successfully quitting smoking, demonstrating the power of having a support as part of the screening process. The work is published in the *Journal of Thoracic Oncology*.

It is estimated those who quit smoking between the ages of 55–59 will have half the risk of lung cancer death compared to current smokers and for those aged 55–74, seven years of smoking cessation reduced [lung-cancer](#) specific mortality by 20%.

Professor Rachael Murray, who led the study, said, "This group of smokers are particularly highly addicted and need support to stop. Helping them to quit will avoid many futures illnesses and improve the outcomes of treatment if they do get sick.

"It also reduces [health inequalities](#) with these smokers much more likely to be on low incomes and living in disadvantaged circumstances. Our research shows with the right support, provided at the right time we can help people stop smoking for good and save many lives in the process."

A survey last year by charity Action on Smoking and Health (ASH) found that in local authority areas that already had lung health checks 73% had seen an increase in demand for support to stop smoking. Community stop smoking support is currently the responsibility of local government, but The Health Foundation have reported that funding for services has fallen by 45% since 2015/16.

This reflects the experience of the Cornish stop smoking service. In

Cornwall, where the lung health checks have already been rolled out, a local decision was taken to link screening with specialist stop-smoking service Healthy Cornwall which is part of Cornwall Council.

The Lung Health Check team were trained by the council team to have meaningful conversations about smoking and refer into the stop smoking service. The approach has proved to be a great success for those who take up support with 47 percent being smoke-free at four weeks. However, the lack of funding has created challenges for the service.

More information: R. Murray et al, PL03.03 Personalised Smoking Cessation Support in a Lung Cancer Screening Programme: The Yorkshire Enhanced Stop Smoking Study (YESS), *Journal of Thoracic Oncology* (2022). [DOI: 10.1016/j.jtho.2022.07.011](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jtho.2022.07.011)

Provided by University of Nottingham

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