



EUROPEAN NETWORK FOR SMOKING PREVENTION  
RESEAU EUROPEEN POUR LA PREVENTION DU TABAGISME aisbl

## **European Network of Quitlines (ENQ): Developing Best-Practice Tools and Policy Recommendations**

### **ENSP Framework Project 2003-2004**

#### **Project Co-ordinator**

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#### **Participating Countries**

Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom.

#### **Introduction**

The European Network of Quitlines was established in 2000. As a result of the network, colleagues have learned how to set up and develop a Quitline service and existing services have been improved by implementation of new technologies: e.g. e-mail counselling, tracking systems and targeting key groups of smokers. The Pan-European Research Project was conceived in February 2002 in view of the need for more scientific research data on the quality and effectiveness of the European Quitlines. It was expected that this research would strengthen the position of the Quitlines by developing a strong European evidence base. The ENQ project supports the developments of actions, providing and exchanging information in order to assess and develop community policy strategies and measures, with the purpose of stabilising effective interventions aimed at tackling tobacco as a health determinant. One of the main project objectives is to develop a Code of Practice model for all helplines across a wide range of health services, promoting a large-scale multidisciplinary and horizontal approach to disease prevention, treating addiction, lifestyle and behaviour management.

ENQ held a major European training seminar in July 2004, as well as two European Steering Groups in September 2004 (examining the ESCHER research project) and February 2005 (examining i.a. ENQ's possible role in the HELP campaign). A further training seminar was also held in December 2004 to train Quitline representatives in completing callers' questionnaires in order to train their own counsellors.

#### **Objectives**

The primary objective is to contribute to and promote health improvement and reduce morbidity and premature mortality by bringing together experienced and newer European Quitlines to develop code of practice tools and policy recommendations.

Specifically, the aims for 2003/2004 were:

- to invite all new accession and EFTA countries to participate;
- to develop the ENQ Quality Standard Accreditation across Europe;
- to host the 1<sup>st</sup> training seminar in London;
- to develop, publish and disseminate an authoritative code of practice for Quitlines;
- to develop the website and a web-based forum, web-based counselling and further technological developments;
- to begin the first stage of the research project, which will produce recommendations on how Quitlines should be organised to have optimum impact;
- evaluate the impact of tobacco product labelling on Quitlines.

## **Achievements**

In 2003/2004 the following results were obtained for the ENQ project:

- the ENQ network was expanded from 15 to 22 members;
- a major European training seminar was held in London with 60 participants;
- an ESCHER research steering group was held in The Hague attended by all participating quitlines;
- the European Guide to Best Practice was published and disseminated;
- the ENQ website was redesigned to promote links between the Member States;
- the ESCHER research protocol, logistics, measurements instruments were developed;
- data on the organisation of each quitline was collected by interviewing representatives of the quitlines;
- caller data was collected across all participating countries;
- ESCHER research website was developed to track research progress of each quitline;

## **Next steps**

The European Guide to Best Practice is an important first step in the development of the ENQ accreditation programme, which will be implemented across all Member States. Steering groups and training seminars are very well attended, and provide an invaluable base for improving quality standards; there is therefore very strong support for future development of the network. The new board members have requested more intensive and tailored mentoring and support; a new monitoring programme will be set up to this end.

One key area for future progression is the development of a new programme to improve the accessibility of member quitlines to key target groups including people with disabilities, minority ethnic groups and smokers from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

All members have also expressed considerable interest in the potential for new technology to enhance the effectiveness of their quitlines. As there is a lack of evidence on the effectiveness of web-based interventions, the study proposed by the Finnish quitline KTL will evaluate the effectiveness of such interventions as part of quitlines across Europe. Quality standards will also be developed as part of the ENQ accreditation programme.

With regard to the HELP media campaign, the quitlines strongly support this and will feature in the advertisements, providing practical support. The quitlines will also provide data on the impact of HELP and will also be involved in the evaluation.

The ESCHER project is on target for its final objective in the coming years. There is a need to build in time to reach consensus with all participating quitlines.