

**DEDICATED MANCHESTER STOP SMOKING CHAMPIONS  
ARE REWARDED FOR YEARS OF HARD WORK**

Three Manchester NHS Stop Smoking champions who have helped save the lives of hundreds of smokers by encouraging them to quit have been commended at a North West awards ceremony.

Councillor Pat Karney, Jenny Cowell and Jane Sunter all won awards from Smokefree North West at City Inn, Manchester, to mark the 10 Year Anniversary of Stop Smoking Services in the region. Since their launch in 1999, North West Stop Smoking Services have collectively helped 371,693 people quit smoking.

Pat Karney, Director of Smokefree Greater Manchester, was awarded the Outstanding Contribution for his years of work towards a smokefree region. Pat has provided exceptional vision and leadership on tobacco control in Greater Manchester, helping deliver the tobacco control manifesto across the city region.

Pat said: "I am delighted to have been given this award, but for me the greatest moment was when the smokefree legislation was passed in 2007, enabling our younger generation to grow up in a smokefree environment. I lost my mother to a smoking related illness, and so many people in Greater Manchester suffer an impaired quality of life due to smoking. If we can protect young people from tobacco it will be a great achievement."

Will Blandamere, who nominated Pat for the award, said, "Pat has associated himself personally with the fight to reduce the harm done by smoking, and is always willing to promote tobacco control."

Another award for Outstanding Contribution to Tobacco Control went to Jane Sunter of Smokefree North West. Starting as an advisor, Jane has worked hard to create a nationally renowned Stop Smoking Service recognised for innovation and achievement. Nominating Jane, Ali Read and Edna Boampong said: "Jane is passionate in addressing health inequality, never losing sight of the people of Manchester and now the North West who we serve."

Jenny Cowell was the winner of the Communications Award. Jenny has worked in NHS Communications for 21 years, beginning as a PA and working her way up. She joined the Manchester Stop Smoking Service in 2007 and the organisation has barely been out of the news since. Jenny has worked hard to raise the profile of the organisation in both national and regional media and has organised huge events for the Smokefree anniversary, drawing 1,500 people to a recent event at Wythenshawe. She has also secured the support of high profile celebrities such as Stephanie Wareing of Hollyoaks and Liz Dawn from Coronation Street.

Jenny said: "I am really honoured to receive the award, it is a real surprise. I've never smoked myself, but I really enjoy the challenge of using communications to raise awareness of the benefits of stopping smoking, to encourage people to quit smoking themselves and to protect children and young people from second hand smoke."

Chair of Smokefree North West Dr Janet Atherton, who presented the award, said: "It is important that we recognise and celebrate today that over the past 10 years more than one third of a million people have been helped to quit smoking by North West Stop Smoking Services.

"Our Manchester champions have made a fantastic contribution to help people live longer and healthier lives. They deserve our thanks for that."

People who want to quit smoking can contact Manchester Stop Smoking Service on 0161 205 5998.

#### **Notes to editors**

1. For more information contact Anne Arnold or Jo Kingston at COI News & PR North West at [anne.arnold@coi.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:anne.arnold@coi.gsi.gov.uk) or [jo.kingston@coi.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:jo.kingston@coi.gsi.gov.uk) Tel: 0161 618 1627 / 1621
2. Each Stop Smoking Service Manager was asked to invite two people from their team to the awards ceremony and each team was asked to nominate a colleague for the following awards:
  - Outstanding contribution to services/tobacco control
  - Team Leader Award
  - Smokefree Pregnancy Award
  - Community/BME Award
  - Hospital Specialist Award
  - Communication Award
  - Award for innovation in services/tobacco control

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