

# The tools you need to quit

**Ottawa Model for Smoking Cessation.** Program offers tobacco dependence treatment to smokers

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For Metro

For more than 20 years, The Ottawa Heart Institute has been offering people the help they need to quit smoking through a variety of smoking cessation services.

The Quit Smoking Program (QSP), an outpatient program available to smokers in the Ottawa area, was launched in the early 1990s. In 2002, the Ottawa Model for Smoking Cessation (OMSC) was created after experts at the Heart Institute recognized that hospital in-patients were also looking for help butting out.

"It's about making tobacco dependence treatment part of the standard care that hospitals begin to provide to pa-

tients who smoke," said Kerri-Anne Mullen, manager of OMSC National Network. "For every patient that's admitted to hospital, they're systematically identified for smoking status. We find out who is a current smoker who is in hospital and then document it on the patient record."

Patients who are smokers then receive a consultation on quitting while in hospital and are offered medications, primarily nicotine replacement, and other aids to quit, free of charge.

Even after patients leave the hospital, health-care professionals follow up on their progress for months.

"We keep in touch with them for up to six months after they leave and help guide them through a quit attempt," Mullen said.



The Ottawa Model for Smoking Cessation was created after experts at the Ottawa Heart Institute recognized that hospital in-patients who were smokers were also looking for help butting out. COURTESY OF THE OTTAWA HEART INSTITUTE

Everything is done in a non-judgmental way, she said, understanding that tobacco use is an addiction and nicotine is a highly addictive substance.

"This is not a lifestyle choice. People don't start at

the age of 12 and continue smoking for 40 years because they choose to do that 25 times a day. It's an addiction."

Thanks to the program's success locally, the OMSC has been adopted by more than 180 in-patient, outpatient

and primary-care settings across Canada.

Mullen said, from what her team has seen here in Ottawa and across the country, the OMSC significantly increases quit rates among patients who are

part of the program.

"Our data shows that 70 per cent of smokers who are in hospital want to quit so it's a really opportune time to speak to people about it."

For more information, visit [ottawamodel.ottawaheart.ca](http://ottawamodel.ottawaheart.ca).

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