



Multilingual Quitline

Background

In 2006, [Cancer Institute NSW](#), Australia's first government funded cancer control agency, funded the NSW Multicultural Health Communication Service (MHCS) and Quitline NSW to develop strategies to increase access of smokers who speak a language other than English to access smoking cessation services.

During this time, Quitline NSW <http://www.icanquit.com.au/further-resources/quitline> - was using telephone interpreters to provide smoking cessation advice in languages other than English and were receiving an average of 20 calls a year from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) smokers.

Since then, various strategies with language specific phone numbers, partnerships with CALD organisations, were trialled finding ways for a cost-effective language-specific service.

Now, bilingual speaking smoking cessation advisors have been recruited and trained to handle calls in English and Arabic, Cantonese, Mandarin and Vietnamese. CALD smokers calling the language-specific numbers can now speak immediately with their preferred language advisor. Direct contact with language specific smoking cessation advisors have since resulted in an average of 600 calls yearly from CALD smokers.

The Multilingual Quitlines provide free, confidential and individually-tailored service telephone advice to assist smokers in the quitting process. The Multilingual Quitlines are managed by [Quitline NSW](#) in partnership with the NSW Multicultural Health Communication Service and funded by the [Cancer Institute NSW](#)

Language- specific quitlines staffed by bilingual speaking advisors are available in the following languages:

Arabic

Chinese (Cantonese and Mandarin)

English

Korean*

Vietnamese

*Korean speaking smokers can leave a message to be called by a Quitline NSW advisor with the telephone based – Translating and Interpreter Service (TIS)

For other languages

A telephone interpreter can be organised for all other languages by Quitline NSW advisors.

How do the multilingual quitlines work?

Smokers who need assistance in quitting smoking can access the language-specific quitlines by calling the respective numbers from anywhere in Australia. This is for the cost of a local call from a landline, with higher costs for mobile phones.

Multilingual Quitline advisors can provide you with advice about quitting smoking, strategies on preparing to quit, avoiding slip ups and staying smokefree. The Multilingual Quitline service like the Quitline NSW service can also offer a free callback service to provide smokers with extra support during their quit journey.

The call back service is offered to increase the likelihood of smokers successfully quitting. The first callback would be made the day prior to or on a nominated quit date. There would then be two to three callbacks in the week following the nominated quit date to offer further support. Another three to four callbacks over the next few weeks are offered to assist smokers in becoming and/or staying smoke free.

Follow up calls are also made at three, six and 12 months of a smoker's nominated quit date to track the progress of their quit journey. If they have slipped up, a Multilingual Quitline advisor will explore the reasons why they have slipped up and provide encouragement to not look at this as a failure but to use this as a stepping stone that will lead to successful quitting. The callback service will be offered again at this time. Callers to the Multilingual Quitline numbers can speak immediately with their preferred language.

If a caller cannot get through to a bilingual advisor straight away, the system allows for callers to listen to pre-recorded language-specific information (Arabic, Chinese and Vietnamese) about steps to quit smoking and other information such as smoking and pregnancy. Callers can also request for a language-specific written information in the form of a "Quit kit" or choose to go to a voice mail and leave their contact details for a return call (call-back service).

The NSW Multicultural Tobacco Control Network

The NSW Multicultural Health Communication Service convenes a state-wide network of individuals and organisations working in Tobacco Control and CALD communities. The NSW Multicultural Tobacco Control Network was established in 2006 and has the following purpose: To provide a forum for people working in the field of multicultural tobacco control to:

1. Share information on current issues and best practice models in multicultural tobacco control.
2. Identify collaboration, education, or funding opportunities.
3. Enhance coordination of the planning, monitoring and problem-solving of multicultural tobacco control activities, including cessation services, resource development, and culturally targeted health promotion activities.
4. Advocate for equitable resourcing for multicultural tobacco control.
5. Provide specialist advice to government and community sectors and, where possible, inform policy relating to multicultural tobacco control.

Tobacco control activities in CALD communities

To encourage collaboration and reduce duplication in tobacco control activities in CALD communities in NSW, MHCS also collates a list of activities, language groups and contacts for organisations.