

Authors: Anne G. Granas¹; Arild Haugli¹; Anne M. Horn¹

Source: [International Journal of Pharmacy Practice](#), December 2004, vol. 12, no. 4, pp. 179-184(6)

Publisher: [Pharmaceutical Press](#)

Abstract:

Objective To investigate the quality of the smoking cessation advice on over-the-counter (OTC) nicotine replacement treatment (NRT) provided by community and hospital pharmacies in Norway and to assess any change in customer services and pharmaceutical smoking cessation advice after a change in legislation deregulating NRT from pharmacy-only to general sale.

Method A mystery shopper made 106 visits to 53 pharmacies in Oslo, Norway. The first visit was when NRT was a pharmacy-only medicine and the second when it had become available from any outlet as a general sales product. The pharmacies were scored on 12 observation parameters regarding customer service and pharmaceutical advice (score 0-4, total possible score was 48).

Key findings There was considerable inter- and intra-pharmacy variation in scores. The pharmacies total score ranged from 3 to 45. On only 14.2% of the visits was the service categorised as Good. There was no statistically significant difference in total score between the two test periods ($P = 0.56$), and hence no measurable difference in customer services and pharmaceutical advice as a result of increased competition after the switch to general sale. A scatter plot showed no relationship between the individual pharmacies total score at the two visits.

Conclusions Pharmacies scores for the quality of their smoking cessation advice were generally low. There was no measurable change in pharmacies customer service and pharmaceutical advice following the deregulation of NRT. There was little consistency in the total score between the first and the second visit to the same pharmacy. Improvement is needed in the smoking cessation advice provided by Norwegian pharmacies.

Document Type: Research article

Affiliations: 1: Institute for Pharmacy Practice Research (Apoforsk), Norway

Requests for a full text copy of the article can be sent

to anne.granas@isf.uib.no or anne.marie.horn@apotek.no, or from [International Journal of Pharmacy Practice](#)