



Policy statement

Nicotine dependent detainees in police custody – faculty view

The vast majority of smokers can refrain from smoking for a period, but it should be remembered that the effects of withdrawal from any substance, including nicotine, are likely to be exacerbated by the circumstances of acute enforced detention and may affect the legal process. Many of the features of nicotine withdrawal are indistinguishable from anxiety. Certainly craving for nicotine can result in dysphoria and threats of self-harm.

Nicotine gum (as a form of Nicotine Replacement Therapy – NRT) is available to buy over the counter by members of the public. Although there are a number of contraindications to the treatment there is no requirement to involve doctors.

If an individual chooses to smoke or take NRT, he/she takes responsibility for any effects subsequent to this action.