



**Volunteer role:** Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) Researcher Volunteer.

**Posts:** 3 x PPI positions available

**Volunteer manager:** Aimie Hope / Felix Naughton

**Where will you be based:** Home

**Start date:** Immediate or at earliest convenience

**End date:** The study is currently scheduled to run until May 2021

### **Why we want you**

Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) is when members of the public are actively involved in research projects and research organisations (e.g., working in partnership to plan, design, implement, manage, evaluate and disseminate research). As a PPI volunteer for Quit Sense you'll work alongside researchers to help shape a study that investigates a newly developed smartphone app intended to help cigarette smokers to quit and stay quit.

### **What you will be doing**

- Attending online meetings (approximately once every few months) to provide feedback and discuss the progress of the study
- Providing feedback on study procedures, the tasks to be undertaken by participants (e.g., online questionnaires), participant-related issues encountered and possible ways to resolve them, the study website, preliminary findings and the best ways to inform the public, policy makers and researchers on the findings
- The opportunity to use, test and advise on the Quit Sense quit smoking smartphone app

### **The experience you need**

- You will be a current smoker or recent ex-smoker
- Own or have main use of an Android smartphone
- Live in England
- Have good computer skills and an email address
- Be able to attend meetings online

### **What's in it for you**

- Experience of being involved in a research study about addiction and smoking cessation
- Potential satisfaction in helping with an NHS funded study investigating the potential of helping smokers to quit smoking using an innovative digital treatment

**Vacancy Type**

Volunteering

**Contract Type**

Temporary

**Contract Hours**

Casual

**Remuneration**

Unpaid. This is a voluntary role, but you will be compensated for the time taken to attend online PPI meetings (@ £20 per hour)

**Commences**

As soon as possible

**Website**

You can view our public website here: <https://www.quitsense.phpc.cam.ac.uk/index.html>

**Interested?**

Contact Aimie at: [a.hope@uea.ac.uk](mailto:a.hope@uea.ac.uk)

## Quit Sense study

The idea for the Quit Sense app came from talking to smokers who were struggling to quit. They wanted help to stop them reaching for a cigarette when they had an urge to smoke. Urges to smoke can happen at any time, most often due to where a person is (e.g. at work) or what they are doing (e.g. socialising). It is not practical to have a person following them around offering advice and support when they get an urge. But as most people own smartphones, we (Cambridge and East Anglia University researchers) decided to use the in-built sensors in smartphones to work out where someone is or what they are doing. These ideas, along with ideas from several members of the public, helped us create Quit Sense, an app that gives smokers trying to quit 'in the moment' support to help them avoid or manage urges to smoke.

Quit Sense works by asking smokers, before they start trying to quit, for information about their surroundings (e.g. home, work) whenever they smoke and how they are feeling (e.g. down, stressed). Each time this happens the app uses the phone's in-built sensors (e.g. GPS) to record their location. Once smokers start a quit attempt, Quit Sense sends them advice on how to avoid smoking whenever they approach or spend time in a place where they previously told it they had smoked. Quit Sense uses the information the person has given about their surroundings and feelings when they smoke to match advice and support to each location. This is a new approach to help smokers and our pilot studies showed that Quit Sense delivers support as expected and participants like it.

This is a small feasibility study but, in the future, we want to run a large study to tell us if Quit Sense helps smokers to quit smoking. First, we need to do this feasibility study to help us plan for a full-scale study. The feasibility study will help us to design the larger study by telling us how many participants complete a final measure which tells us if they smoke or not; the cost of recruiting participants; whether we can collect information about the costs of Quit Sense if it was used in practice; and the number of participants who install and use Quit Sense. The feasibility study will help give us an indication as to whether Quit Sense is likely to help smokers to stop and how it might do this e.g. by boosting confidence. Finding out whether the larger study is possible could save money in the long run and lead to patient benefit by ensuring NHS funding is spent on projects with a good chance of success.

We will recruit 160 smokers using online adverts on the Google search engine and Facebook. Participants will have an equal chance of being put into one of two groups. There will be a 'usual care' group, who will be sent a weblink to the NHS' SmokeFree website which provides standard information about NHS help to stop smoking. There will also be an app group who will receive the same weblink but will also be given access to the Quit Sense app. Participants will be followed up at 6 weeks and 6 months after they start the study to collect information and to compare groups on smoking measures.

We will publish our findings in journals, present findings at conferences and public events (e.g. Norwich Science Festival), write press releases, communicate with key stakeholders (e.g. Public Health England) and send information to the public and scientific community via social media. If the results are encouraging, we will apply for funding to do a large study to tell us whether Quit Sense really does help smokers to quit smoking for good.