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**“It’s easy to get fags”: A qualitative study of disadvantaged young people’s perspectives on cigarette availability and access**

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## **Abstract**

**Introduction:** Reducing young people's access to cigarettes is a key element of smoking prevention policies. This paper explores how young people source cigarettes following the increase in the UK minimum age of sale from 16 to 18 years.

**Methods:** Semi-structured individual, paired and triadic interviews with 60 disadvantaged young people aged between 12 and 17. Participants were recruited from clubs and voluntary organisations offering advice and support to disadvantaged young people.

**Results:** Most participants said they sourced cigarettes from shops, but understandings of 'buying cigarettes from shops' included using intermediaries for proxy purchases. Access from social sources was contingent on reciprocation, and blackmarket sources were avoided. The distinction between potential and actual sources reflected participants concerns about their presentation of self. Those who bought cigarettes directly from shops accrued status and power in negotiating social hierarchies. Participants therefore highlighted their smoking related competencies i.e. ability to secure regular retail access to tobacco, while downplaying the significant difficulties they experienced.

**Conclusions:** The presentational dimension of youth cigarette access highlights a need for caution in associating self-reported changes in young people's cigarette sources straightforwardly with access policies. The conflation of direct retail purchases with proxy purchases, and the inter-relationship between commercial and social cigarette sources also raises issues for interpreting data on 'usual' cigarette sources from national surveys. Findings suggest that some young people may still be both reliant on making retail cigarette purchases following the increase in the age of sale in the UK, and experiencing significant difficulties making these.

## **Implications**

This study highlights the self-presentational dimension of youth cigarette access in a particular community context, and the important distinction between the apparent range of sources available and their social acceptability in young people's social networks. Young smokers tended to conflate direct retail purchases with proxy purchases, raising issues for interpreting survey data on 'usual' cigarette source. The presentational dimension of youth

cigarette access also highlights a need for caution in associating self-reported changes in young people's cigarette sources with access policies. Despite participants' stated easy access, few were able to buy cigarettes directly, underscoring the effectiveness of youth access policies.

## Introduction

The implementation of laws prohibiting tobacco sales to minors is a key component of smoking prevention policy in many countries including the UK. The effectiveness of such policies in reducing youth smoking, however, remains controversial (1, 2). Reviews of the effectiveness of youth access interventions conclude that while robust compliance testing may reduce under-age sales, there is limited evidence of impact on the perceived availability of cigarettes or youth smoking prevalence (3, 4). These reviews have been criticised, however, for pooling studies where cigarette access was curtailed with those that failed to reduce access (5, 6). A more recent review (1) identified 19 studies in which youth cigarette access had been curtailed. In each case youth smoking subsequently declined in at least one study population sub-group.

Assessing the impact of such laws is difficult as the variables ostensibly mediating the relationship between youth access interventions and youth smoking are problematic. In the US, for example, while the proportion of school-age children sourcing cigarettes from shops declined following the Synar amendment in the 1990s, the perceived availability of cigarettes remained high (7). This has been attributed to more youth accessing cigarettes through non-retail sources (2, 8-11). Rates of retail purchasing may therefore be an unreliable proxy for real-world cigarette availability. Retailer sales may also be an unreliable proxy measure: a 10% sales rate may imply that young people can buy cigarettes from all tobacco retailers 10% of the time making access difficult, or from 10% of retailers all of the time making targeted access easy (6). Compliance may also be overestimated because of relatively artificial testing methods (12, 13). Assessing availability through self-report is similarly problematic, with the perceived availability of cigarettes varying with factors other than sales laws.

The effectiveness of interventions to reduce tobacco sales to minors is therefore best assessed on a case-by-case basis (6). In the UK the increase in the minimum age of sale from 16 to 18 years in 2007 coincided not only with a decline in school age children reporting 'usually' sourcing cigarettes from shops and an increase regular smokers reporting difficulties sourcing cigarettes from shops, but with a decline in regular smoking (14, 15). Whether this was attributable to sales restrictions, however, is difficult to assess. Sales laws are unlikely to reduce cigarette availability without robust enforcement (1), and compliance testing in the UK was low compared with jurisdictions where the retail supply of cigarettes was demonstrably disrupted (4). Framing changes in young people's cigarette sources or the

perceived difficulty of sourcing cigarettes as intermediary variables in reducing smoking uptake is also problematic. While regular smoking among 11-15 year olds in England fell between 2006 and 2008, rates of regular (and occasional) smoking were identical in 2007 and 2008. The decline in regular smoking may therefore have been antecedent to the increase in the age of sale in October 2007. Further, and somewhat counter intuitively, the increase in perceived difficulty sourcing cigarettes and decline in regular smoking was limited to 15 year olds, with no comparable decline among 13 year olds (15).

Qualitative studies have facilitated a more nuanced examination of young people's cigarette sources. These have shown that when retail access is curtailed young people identify and target amenable tobacco retailers, or buy cigarettes through intermediaries i.e. proxy purchases (5, 16, 17). Young people can also access social sources such as friends and family, including for proxy purchases, or buy cigarettes from blackmarket sources including 'fag houses' (local houses which sell blackmarket cigarettes) or via social sales in schools (18-21). However, these sources are inter-related, with the social availability of cigarettes contingent on some young people buying cigarettes from shops (22). Regular smokers particularly may require more cigarettes and regular access than social sources can supply (16). Cigarette sources also vary with factors other than perceived availability. For example, young people may avoid buying illicit (blackmarket) product because of concerns about what these purchases communicate to others in terms of self-image (16, 17).

The relative importance of the different sources available to young people has not been explored in depth in previous research, in terms either of facilitating youth cigarette access, or their meaning or subjective significance in young people's social worlds. The study reported here therefore aimed to explore these meanings in a particular community context, i.e. in two disadvantaged communities in Edinburgh, to move beyond identifying young people's usual cigarette sources to consider which sources they routinely access and, importantly, why. A social constructionist perspective was adopted to highlight the social meanings encoded in youth cigarette access, with Goffman's (23) work on the presentation of self used to contextualise participants' representations of themselves and others.

## **Methods**

### ***Sampling and recruitment***

Twenty-eight interviews were carried out in two disadvantaged communities in Edinburgh in 2010 with a total of 60 young people aged between 12 and 17 (Table 1). Both communities are ranked in the highest deprivation quintile as assessed by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) and were chosen as both regular smoking and ease of cigarette access vary inversely with socioeconomic status (24-28). Participants were recruited from youth clubs and organisations offering advice, counselling and support to disadvantaged young people. Organisations were provided with information/consent sheets and the interviewer (TT) attended these for several weeks to generate interest in the study and rapport with participants. Participants were recruited purposively on the basis of their smoking or having some other involvement with tobacco eg friends who smoked. For example, groups of young people congregating to smoke outside these venues were observed to include non-smokers, with some also involved in cigarette exchanges. Potential participants were provided with information and consent materials, including opt-out consent forms for parents/carers, and interviewed during subsequent visits. While recruitment was primarily targeted at 13 and 15 year olds, the study used individual, paired and triadic interviews with self-selecting small friendship groups to facilitate a more nuanced examination of the social contexts mediating young people's access to tobacco, which necessitated including a broader age range. Giving participants the choice of being interviewed alone or with friends helped increase their engagement in the research process as reflected, for example, in the interactions between participants where they challenged and/or supported each other's accounts, often with little or no prompting from the interviewer. Through this process it was possible to explore individual and group negotiated accounts. Most participants chose to be interviewed in friendship pairs (n=16) or triads (n=36). Only 7 participants elected to be interviewed alone. Ethical approval was obtained from the Ethics Committee at the School for Health in Social Science at the University of Edinburgh.

Participants' smoking status was assessed through the interview transcripts (Table 1). Regular smokers smoked daily, and occasional smokers reported intermittent smoking. Several participants reported having tried smoking, ex-smokers had currently quit, and some had never tried smoking. The analysis distinguishes primarily between regular and experimental

smokers, i.e. between daily smokers and others involved with smoking in some other context or capacity to reflect the entrenchment of smoking in the study communities.

### ***Data collection and analysis***

Semi-structured interviews were informed by topic guides covering smoking, cigarette access and the various contexts in which cigarette exchanges took place i.e. school, home and other public spaces (see Supplementary File 1 for the topic guide). Topic guides were applied flexibly to facilitate a narrative interviewing style. Interview transcripts were managed in NVivo v.9. The first coding stage involved identifying and separating descriptive themes, separating discussion pertaining to cigarette access from that on cigarette branding, for example. A summary of the descriptive, emergent and overarching themes for the whole data set is provided in Supplementary File 2. Emergent themes and sub-themes subsequently informed the development of an index to disambiguate the data. This was applied systematically to the whole data set. Following this initial application, indices were revised to reflect emergent thematic categories and sub-categories. Existing categories were also expanded and collapsed as appropriate (29). Thereafter, data were sorted by theme or concept. The thematic analysis drew on social constructionism (30) and Goffman's thesis on the presentation of self (23) to draw out the presentational dimension of youth cigarette access. Participants' descriptions of retail cigarette access, for example, were related in terms of their embodiment or demonstration of a range of smoking related competencies and knowledge. The process was iterative and collaborative: all authors read transcripts and contributed to the analysis. Participants are identified in the text by number, with sex, age and smoking status in parentheses eg P1 (M16R) indicates that P1 is a male 16 year old regular smoker.

## **RESULTS**

### ***Perceived ease of cigarette access***

All participants represented smoking as ubiquitous, with most mentioning parental smoking, articulating a perception that *'everyone smokes around here'*. Social spaces where smoking took place were identified, and all described social contexts where cigarettes were freely



available to non-smokers, most commonly in the informal social spaces in which young people congregated to smoke at school. The increase in the age of sale and related efforts to reduce under-age sales was therefore perceived to be minimal. When questioned about difficulties sourcing cigarettes participants stated *'it's easy to get fags'* and identified alternatives to retail purchases to highlight the perceived futility of regulation:

*P1: They'll always try and get people under the age of eighteen to stop smoking but it'll never happen...It'll never...whatever they do they'll never...'cos...there's always a way...of them getting fags...like walking out their house and seeing a packet of fags, their mums: 'I'll take one like that'...They're always gonna find a way to get fags, so whatever they do...*

*TT: Yeah...Could I just ask what ways you found?*

*P1: Ask...Just walk down the street...You always got a house to go to...you can go to anyone: 'What's the best way of getting fags?' They'll always tell you a good shop to get...There's good and bad shops...we just ask people...: 'How is it I'm best getting fags'...err...: 'If you go up the road...to that shop up there there's a load of people at that'll go in for you'...: 'Ah. Nae bother. Cheers mate'...Just walk down the street... 'Ken anywhere I can get cheap fags?'...: 'Aye. Eh...That house, round the corner, up the street and blah blah blah'... 'They sell fags...just go to the door...say you know me...just ask for fags they'll sell you'*

This account was fairly typical, with most participants associating the increased age of sale with governmental efforts to curtail youth smoking while challenging the rationale underpinning this. This pattern was repeated in all interviews, with participants describing alternative sources *'Steal them off your Ma!'* *'Get people to go in for you!'* or providing more prosaic accounts consistent with P1 (M16R)'s. These accounts ostensibly support the hypothesis that demand shifts to alternative sources when retail access is curtailed.

The impression of straightforward cigarette access these accounts engender, however, may be misleading. While participants consistently identified alternatives to retail purchases, few identified these as socially legitimate options when specifying their own 'usual' sources. Cigarettes for sale in schools, for example, were considered prohibitively expensive, and those from 'fag houses' were described by all as fake or inferior and therefore avoided. None admitted buying any, and those who had been given them by others reported that they 'taste like camel shite', describing them as an 'embarrassment' and a 'disgrace'. While most participants shared cigarettes with friends, the expectation of reciprocation was encoded in the act of asking for and giving cigarettes, and only experimental smokers relied on these as a

primary source. There was therefore a clear distinction between the range of available sources and those routinely accessed by participants. This distinction is explored below.

### ***Retail cigarette purchases***

Retail cigarette purchases were identified as the main source by regular smokers, with most asserting: *'I get cigarettes from shops'*. However, this impression of near universal retail cigarette availability is also misleading. Follow-up questions revealed that what were initially represented as retail purchases were almost invariably made through intermediaries. P9 (F15R), for example, repeatedly referred to buying cigarettes from shops despite acknowledging that she avoided direct purchases because of the embarrassment of refusals. As P31 (M17R) explained, this *'happens all the time. It's so fucking annoying'*. The tendency to downplay sales refusals and obfuscate third party involvement in participant's retail purchases is illustrated below:

*TT: Right. So what...always...you buy your own cigarettes do you...*

*P28: Aye...*

*TT: Right Ok...How...how does that work?*

*P28: Go to the shop and buy them...*

*TT: Nah, but I mean do...*

*P27: Some...you wait, until somebody says: 'Can you go in the shop for me, to buy'...*

*P28: Or I just send my mum in...*

*P27: Go: 'Ten Richmond Kingsize please', and they go in and get them...*

*P28: No, it's 20 Richmond Kingsize...*

*P27/29: [Laugh]...*

*TT: So sorry you...you get someone to go in...*

*P28: I get my mum to go to the shop for me...*

What are initially represented as direct cigarette purchases are ultimately revealed to be proxy purchases following probing around their regularity and the process. This account is fairly typical: among 34 participants regularly buying cigarettes from shops, only three made these transactions without regularly employing intermediaries i.e. proxy purchases. Most were deterred by the embarrassment associated with sales refusals.

Consequently, those making direct purchases distinguished themselves from others not merely in terms of their credible adult presentation i.e. their ability to pass for 18 in shops, contrasting their ease of access with the difficulties experienced by others, but were also called on to buy cigarettes for friends, thereby increasing cigarette availability in their social networks. In the following account, P11 (F16N), a non-smoker, highlights the distinction between herself and others making direct purchases confers, and the presentational dimension and social capital encoded in the process:

*P11: My friends, sometimes they send me in... 'cos I look older than some of people...when I'm uptown and stuff... 'Cos like...some of the people are older than us like...and they are over 18 and they can get fags...But...they always get ID'd and they don't have ID on them, and because usually on the weekends I always tend to dress...not like as though I'm going out somewhere, but like jeans and a nice top or something, not my joggings and stuff on. And when they're like that they look much younger, but when I've got like my hair done and I've got make-up on at the weekends then...I look older than them, they all send me to shops, and I always get sold for them...*

*TT: Right...Ok...*

*P10: 'Cos we've been uptown so much now we've got to know the shopkeepers anyway, so most of the shops you go in know...they know us anyway, so...*

*TT: Right Ok. So you tend to go to the same places then, that's how it...*

*P11: Most of the times...Like, we speak to them all the time...And they ask us how we are and stuff, 'cos they recognise us 'cos we go in quite a lot and stuff...*

Sourcing cigarettes through shops was therefore desirable among participants not merely in terms of facilitating cigarette access, but in negotiating social hierarchies. P12 (F16R) described the 'policies' she implemented to distinguish between those she would and wouldn't buy cigarettes for, affording her a position of relative power, and others, like P11 (F16N) invested significant efforts in developing relationships with retailers to secure a similar role. P8 (F17R) sacrificed part of her driving lesson to brandish car keys at her local newsagent to persuade him she was 'older', while others leveraged existing relationships. P52 (F16R), for example, was able to buy cigarettes from a particular shop because: '*my dad's friend works there in the mornings*' and her father permitted her to smoke.

### ***Proxy cigarette purchases***

Proxy purchases represented the main source for participants, who described a progression from less to more targeted third party recruitment strategies. Younger participants and experimental smokers described congregating outside shops asking passers-by to buy cigarettes on their behalf: *'Anyone that walks past you, you just ask'*. When probed further these indiscriminate third party recruitment strategies were frequently revealed to be unsuccessful. As P37 (F14R) acknowledged, most people: *'just ignore you, or go: "Nah! Sorry!" and then walk away'*. More experienced smokers therefore targeted particular types of individuals for proxy purchases, characterising these as *'chavs'*, *'neds'*, *'hobos'* and most commonly *'junkies'*. Participants recruiting *'junkies'* were usually more successful.

However, given the self-presentational concerns encoded in participants' tendency to obfuscate any third party involvement in their cigarette purchases, and the perceived social advantages conferred by making direct purchases, the extent to which *'junkies'* refers to a consistent set of characteristics other than a willingness to buy cigarettes for underage young people is difficult to assess. Most of those recruiting *'junkies'* claimed to be able to buy cigarettes themselves, but *'preferred'* making purchases through intermediaries to avoid the hassle of seeking out particular individuals or shops: *'fuck going all the way uptown for cigarettes, eh?'*. However, given the significant efforts invested by other participants in identifying and maintaining relationships with retailers, and the social advantages conferred through negotiating regular retail access to tobacco, it is likely that both these amenable tobacco retailers and the characterisation of proxy purchasers as junkies represent presentational devices to enable participants to frame their proxy purchases as a legitimate recourse as opposed to a necessity when most were refused direct sales most of the time. To iterate the clear frustrations of P31 (M17R) *'It's so fucking annoying'*.

### ***Social sources***

While younger and experimental smokers could sustain their smoking by relying primarily on social sources, accepting offers of, rather than asking for cigarettes, discussion around more regular access was structured around reciprocity and trust, with reciprocation implied both in the act of asking for and giving others cigarettes. While the flexibility of reciprocal arrangements varied with the strength of social ties, even P8 (F17R) and P9 (F15R), close friends since childhood, were fastidious in their reciprocal accountancy practices:

*P9: She had four fags right...she...we had thirty fags...and she ended up having four by the end of the night...and I had five, she gave me five and went away and left me right...And then...*

*P8: [Laughs] 'Cos she was at her pals house and I wasnae sitting wi' her and this...laddie that I barely even ken...so I went away and met my pal...[Laughs]...*

*P9: I still had...I still had three fags by the end of the night...Mhmm. And you had four, and you had...how many fifteen...*

*P8; Err. Excuse me...when...*

*P9: Fifteen. Twenty. Fifteen. Twenty [Laughs]...*

*P8: Whose pals from the village tore the fags off me when I was steaming...*

*P9: Errr. That wouldnae be my pals...*

*P8: Your pals...[Laughs]...*

*P9: You better give me a fag later on...I'm gonna steal ...*

*P8: I've got fags...*

Despite the tone and context, the exchange referred to events at a recent party, P9 (F15R) is not communicating a vague sense of entitlement but a calculation of her dues. P8 (F17R) makes no attempt to query her friend's numbers, acknowledging her indebtedness in submitting to her demand. This ethic was evident in several contexts, with participants' reciprocal practices both reflecting and sustaining the quality of their social relationships. Occasional smokers would make occasional cigarette purchases to compensate their friends, and failing to reciprocate implied a breach of trust and the rules of friendship. Those failing to meet their mutual obligations were excluded from reciprocal arrangements, and represented in pejorative terms.

*P1: It's like people that...err...you never see with fags but they always ask you for fags eh that really, really annoys me...That really annoys me...or people that I know have got money...but they ask you for fags every single time they see ye...and that really annoys me...*

*TT: Right...right, right. But you still do?*

*P1: No. Never. I never give any of them fags...like my pal Chill through there he works...err...if he's not got any fags I buy him fags... 'cos I know I'll get them back...I know he'll pay me back...But with them, I know I'm gonna get the fags back...An'...the thing is I know he smokes...If he's not got money...it's not his fault...So I'll give him a fag, I'll give him a few fags,... 'cos I know he smokes like the same amount as me, I know how he would feel if he needed a fag... He'd want...and he'd need to go and buy them...but with them, I never see them with fags... but they always ask for a fag every*

*time they see me... So...why...they cannae want...I don't know how to say it but it's like...they...It's like for me they don't smoke but they only want to smoke when...they're like they know you've got fags they just want a fag off you...it just really annoys me...*

Participants' social sources, then, were described in terms which reflected their increasing awareness of a range of informal rules around cigarette access. Experimental smokers lacking the competencies to secure regular retail access were effectively 'permitted' to sustain their smoking by relying primarily on social sources. More experienced smokers were expected to have a means of reciprocating, and to reciprocate. Progressing from experimental to regular smoking therefore entailed progressing from opportunistic, social tobacco acquisition towards more regular retail purchasing, a progression facilitated by acquiring a range of smoking related competencies and knowledge.

Experimental smokers therefore both relied on and were characterised by their reliance on social sources. Regular smokers, conversely, were characterised by their ability to make regular cigarette purchases, with surplus cigarettes generating currency for reciprocal cigarette exchanges and opportunities to influence others' smoking behaviour by gifting cigarettes to others. Those attempting to secure more regular access via social sources without reciprocating were therefore ultimately not merely excluded from reciprocal arrangements, but denied social acknowledgement as 'proper' smokers: *'it's like, for me, they don't smoke'*.

## **Discussion**

While this study was limited by the number of participants and being based in one UK city, the usual sources identified by participants are remarkably consistent. This is in contrast to previous qualitative research on cigarette access, which has highlighted the range of cigarette sources routinely accessed by young people (16, 18, 30) and informed questions about the usual cigarette sources used in youth smoking surveys (14, 15). In this study, most regular smokers sourced cigarettes from shops, either directly or through intermediaries, with most experimental smokers sourcing cigarettes from friends and other people. The purchasing strategies identified by participants have also been described in previous studies, highlighting diverse strategies used to identify and target amenable tobacco retailers, or types of individuals for proxy purchases (5, 12, 16, 17, 20, 21, 31). However, in this study, participants' definition and understanding of buying cigarettes from shops clearly also

encompassed buying cigarettes through intermediaries. The notion that proxy purchases represented a discrete and different mode of acquisition was absent.

Participants' self-presentational concerns also merit elaboration. While all described cigarettes as being readily available from various sources when describing their relatively easy cigarette access, none used these as a primary or regular source. Illicit sources were avoided, and the social availability of cigarettes was misleading. While social sources were routinely mentioned as alternatives to retail purchases, the social availability of cigarettes was contingent not only on some young people continuing to source cigarettes from shops (22), but on individuals negotiating regular retail access to avoid exclusion from reciprocal exchange networks. The implied dichotomy between social and commercial cigarette sources was thereby dissolved in this study. Retail purchases involved social not just economic transactions, with young people investing significant efforts in developing relationships with retailers, recruiting intermediaries for proxy purchases, and/or maintaining friendships that sustained their smoking.

These presentational concerns resonate with findings from other studies examining the social context of smoking. Establishing an autonomous identity is a key imperative of adolescence (32), and several studies have explored the important social function of smoking in communicating a desirable social identity and negotiating social hierarchies (32, 34), where cigarette exchanges can be important in developing and affirming friendships (34). This study locates cigarette access in this broader social context. By highlighting the range of competencies involved in identifying and recruiting 'junkies' as proxy agents, while minimising difficulties they might have experienced making direct purchases, participants demonstrated a concern with representing themselves and others as more or less autonomous agents, with regular smokers distinguishing themselves from others primarily by asserting that they, unlike their less experienced peers, were not passively subject to the increasing constraints on direct under-age sales. These concerns, or what accessing one source over another communicates to others, are likely to vary between contexts. However, the key point is that cigarette access is not just about availability, but also credibility, with young people subverting sales laws to assert autonomy within an increasingly restrictive policy environment.

While it is inappropriate to make strong claims on the strength of a small, purposive sample of young people from one UK city, the findings highlight a need for caution when

interpreting responses to the range of usual cigarette sources in youth surveys (14, 15), in particular in assessing the impact of youth access policies. The tendency of participants to conflate retail and proxy purchases to emphasise their smoking-related competencies suggests that the overlap between these categories and responses may be high. This may explain the inverse relationship between age and perceived ease of access reported following the increase in the age of sale (15). It is therefore important that surveys on youth sources include a range of nuanced questions and response options in order to distinguish between direct and proxy sources. This needs to be informed by qualitative studies on contemporary sources and methods as these may differ between contexts and over time.

If the difficulties young people encounter when attempting to buy cigarettes encompass not only sales refusals but also recruiting intermediaries for proxy purchases, the overall investment required to buy cigarettes from shops may have increased for those previously able to buy directly, but not for those already making proxy purchases. Cigarettes may be available from social and blackmarket sources but these may be avoided because of concerns about self-image. Indeed, while all participants represented cigarette access as straightforward, only three participants bought cigarettes without either recruiting intermediaries or targeting particular premises known to sell cigarettes to underage customers. As such, and despite participants' claims to the contrary, the findings from this study suggest that since the increase in the age of sale in the UK some young people are fundamentally still reliant on making retail purchases of cigarettes and are experiencing significant difficulties in buying cigarettes from shops.

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### **Contributors**

TT, DR and AA conceived and designed the study. TT coordinated the running of the study and conducted the focus groups and interviews, with support from DR and AA. TT, DR and AA read transcripts and developed the analytical framework. TT drafted the manuscript. TT, DR, and AA contributed to the interpretation of the analysis and critically revised the manuscript. All authors are guarantors.



### **Competing interests**

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Table 1: Participants' characteristics

		n=	%
<b>Sex</b>	Male	29	48
	Female	31	52
<b>Age</b>	12	8	13
	13	20	33
	14	7	12
	15	13	22
	16	8	13
	17	4	7
<b>Ethnicity</b>	White Scottish	59	98
	African Scottish	1	2
<b>Smoking status</b>	Regular	30	50
	Occasional	7	12
	Tried	11	18
	Ex-smokers	6	10
	Never	6	10