Introduction The health benefits of stopping smoking are well established and hospitals have a unique opportunity to contribute to protecting and promoting health through smoking cessation interventions. NICE published recommendations in 2006 stating that all health professionals should offer brief advice of the benefits of stopping smoking to their patients and a referral to a specialist service. However, despite this, smoking cessation interventions are not generally part of routine care in a hospital setting.

Method A partnership with Aintree NHS Trust, Pfizer and a design agency was established to develop a creative campaign to promote the stop smoking service to hospital based health professionals who are influential messengers available to give expert advice to patients. Furthermore, we wanted to engage with the patients, friends and family directly to endorse the message. We trained staff on a number of wards with a Champion trained in delivering a brief intervention.

Results The campaign met its objectives to increase the number of patients referred to the hospital stop smoking service. There was a 60% increase in the referrals at Aintree over the first 8 months compared to the previous year. We particularly noticed an increase on the wards with a Champion trained in delivering a brief intervention.

Conclusion A comprehensive educational campaign proved to be effective in raising awareness of the Hospital Stop Smoking Service and increasing referrals within the Trust. A similar campaign could contribute to an increase in referrals and support to patients in other secondary care settings, resulting in smoking cessation interventions becoming part of routine care in hospital settings. Moreover, the campaign contributes to supporting healthcare providers in their role in prevention and health education.