

NDARC awarded \$1.8 million to run text messaging smoking cessation trial

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NDARC's Dr Ryan Courtney was awarded \$1.764 million for a trial of tailored text messaging treatment for smoking cessation among low-socioeconomic status smokers in the latest round of National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) grant funding.

Dr Courtney, who heads NDARC's smoking prevention and intervention program of research, will lead a multinational team that will test if text messaging is as effective as traditional telephone support for stopping smoking.

"Our previous research has found that many smokers prefer text message support to help them quit," Dr Courtney said.

"Messages sent to mobile phones are convenient, can be tailored to smokers' individual circumstances, and are accessible anywhere, anytime.

"People can also text HELP if they are struggling and will receive an instant response to get them through difficult times."

New and innovative treatments with high reach are needed for socially disadvantaged groups where high smoking rates continue to persist.

"Health sectors are trying to realise the potential of mobile health to improve service delivery at low cost, and our study directly meets this need," Dr Courtney said.

"This exciting opportunity [study] offers potentially large improvements in access to treatment for a widely scalable intervention, tailored for those [smokers] most susceptible."

This trial has the potential to offer a new and alternative treatment to traditional telephone-based counselling and immediate practical implications in reducing the preventable deaths of many tobacco smokers.

The funding was among \$82.8 million awarded to 90 projects at UNSW Sydney, placing the university third among all Australian universities for 2018 NHMRC funding, rising from fourth in 2017. You can read the full UNSW story [here](#).

A non-inferiority trial of Tailored Text Messaging versus Quitline for smoking cessation among low-socioeconomic status smokers

Chief investigators: Dr Ryan Courtney (NDARC), Prof Hayden McRobbie (QMUL), Associate Professor Robyn Whittaker (University of Auckland), Professor Anthony Shakeshaft (NDARC), Dr Emily Stockings (NDARC), Associate Professor Dennis Petrie (Monash University), Dr Jamie Brown (UCL), Professor Robert West (UCL), Dr Dennis Thomas (NDARC), Professor Mohammad Siahpush (UNMC)