

Financial Incentives for Preventing Postpartum Return to Smoking (Fipps): Study Protocol for a Three-Arm Randomised Controlled Trial

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1 **Title**

2 Financial Incentives for Preventing Postpartum return to Smoking (FIPPS): study protocol for a
3 three-arm randomised controlled trial

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8 **Abstract**

9 **Background:** Financial incentives are an effective way of helping women to stop smoking during
10 pregnancy. Unfortunately, most women who stop smoking at this time return to smoking within
11 12 months of the infant's birth. There is no evidence for interventions that are effective at
12 preventing postpartum smoking relapse. Financial incentives provided after the birth may help
13 women to sustain cessation. This randomised controlled trial will assess the effectiveness and cost
14 effectiveness of financial incentives to help women who are abstinent from smoking at end of
15 pregnancy to avoid return to smoking up to 12 months postpartum.

16 **Methods:** This is a UK-based, multi-centre, three-arm, superiority, parallel group, individually
17 randomised controlled trial, with 1:1:1 allocation. It will compare the effectiveness of two financial
18 incentive interventions with each other (one intervention for up to three months postpartum
19 offering up to £120 of incentives, the other for up to 12 months postpartum with up to £300 of
20 incentives) and with a no incentives/usual care control group. Eligible women will be between 34
21 weeks gestation and two weeks postpartum, abstinent from smoking for at least four weeks, have
22 an expired carbon monoxide (CO) reading <4 parts per million (ppm), aged at least 16 years,
23 intend remaining abstinent from smoking after the birth and able to speak and read English.

24 The primary outcome is self-reported, lapse-free, smoking abstinence from the last quit attempt in

1 pregnancy until 12 months postpartum, biochemically validated by expired CO and/or salivary
2 cotinine or anabasine. Outcomes will be analysed by intention-to-treat and regression models
3 used to compare the proportion of abstinent women between the two intervention groups and
4 between each intervention group and the control group. An economic evaluation will assess the
5 cost-effectiveness of offering incentives and a qualitative process evaluation will examine barriers
6 and facilitators to trial retention, effectiveness and implementation.

7 **Discussion:** This pragmatic randomised controlled trial will test whether offering financial
8 incentives is effective and cost-effective for helping women to avoid smoking relapse during the
9 12 months after the birth of their baby.

10 **Trial registration:** International Standard Randomised Controlled Trial Number: 55218215.
11 Registered retrospectively on 5th June 2019.

12

13 **Keywords**

14 Intervention, randomised controlled trial, pregnancy, postpartum, smoking relapse prevention,
15 smoking cessation, financial incentives

16

17 **Administrative information**

Title {1}	Financial Incentives for Preventing Postpartum return to Smoking (FIPPS): study protocol for a three-arm randomised controlled trial
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Trial registration {2a and 2b}.	International Standard Randomised Controlled Trial Number registry, No. 55218215 https://doi.org/10.1186/ISRCTN55218215 Registered retrospectively on 5 th June 2019,
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Role of sponsor {5c}	The University of Stirling is the trial sponsor and has delegated all responsibility for the management of the trial and publication of the findings to the Chief Investigator and co-investigators. The sponsor played no part in study design; collection, management, analysis, and interpretation of data; writing of this or other reports or the decision to submit reports for publication.
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3 **Introduction**

4 **Background and rationale {6a}**

5 More women stop smoking during pregnancy than at any other time; around half of pregnant
6 women who smoke are likely to cease smoking 'spontaneously' [1]. This presents a valuable
7 opportunity to help women who stop smoking in pregnancy to stop permanently. Most women
8 who stop smoking in pregnancy wish to remain abstinent after the birth [2]. However, up to three-
9 quarters of spontaneous quitters return to smoking within six months of the birth [3], thereby
10 increasing their risks of smoking-related illness, as well as their children's risks of passive smoking
11 [4,5] and of becoming smokers [6]. Behavioural support has been evaluated as an intervention for
12 preventing postpartum relapse to smoking but there is no evidence for these interventions [7].
13 During pregnancy, offering financial incentives has been shown to be one of the most effective
14 smoking cessation interventions [1, 8) and it is plausible that offering incentives in postpartum will
15 reduce relapse to smoking.

16

1 Several studies have recruited women in early pregnancy and examined the combined effect of
2 offering incentives in pregnancy and postpartum on postpartum rates of smoking abstinence.
3 First, a trial that randomised women to incentives or a control group during pregnancy (N=43)
4 showed that, when providing an incentive voucher of \$50 at one month and two months
5 postpartum (contingent upon validated abstinence), around a third of women still relapsed by two
6 months post-partum and the rate of relapse was similar in the control group [9]. Secondly, a non-
7 randomised study (N=58) offered a \$20 incentive voucher (contingent upon abstinence) once
8 weekly during the initial four weeks postpartum and then every other week for a further eight
9 weeks [10]. In the incentives vs control group, rates of abstinence reduced between end-of-
10 pregnancy (37% vs 9%) and 24-week postpartum assessment (27% vs 0%), in favour of the
11 incentives group. A further trial, which randomised women to receive incentives or not in
12 pregnancy (N=77), used the same intervention schedule as Higgins and colleagues [10] except that
13 payments could escalate based on maintaining abstinence [11]. This study reported abstinence
14 rates for incentives vs control at end-of-pregnancy of 41% vs 10% and at 24-week postpartum as
15 8% vs 3%. Higgins and colleagues 2014 (N=118) [12] randomised women in pregnancy and
16 included the same intervention as Heil and colleagues [11] as well as a revised condition which
17 provided bonuses for those who could meet a more stringent biochemical validation criterion. The
18 validated abstinence rates at end-of-pregnancy and 24 weeks postpartum, respectively, were:
19 standard incentives 36% vs 15%, revised incentives 45% vs 18%, and control 18% vs 8%. In the
20 largest study to date (N=1014), women who were randomised in early pregnancy were offered
21 cash incentives of \$25–40 for each of four home visits at one, two, four and 6 weeks postpartum,
22 \$20 for each of five post-birth counselling calls and \$40 for biochemically verified abstinence at
23 one and six months postpartum [13]. At 6 months postpartum 15% were validated as abstinent in
24 the incentives group and 9% in the control group. This study did not report abstinence at end-of-

1 pregnancy, therefore it was not possible to examine the relapse rates. Finally, a pilot study (N=60),
2 randomising women in early pregnancy, used an app-based intervention and offered vouchers
3 worth \$33 for each validated assessment conducted twice weekly during the first four weeks
4 postpartum and once weekly during a further eight weeks postpartum [14]. At end-of -pregnancy,
5 validated abstinence for the incentives vs control group was 37% vs 13%, while at 24 weeks
6 postpartum it was 20% vs 7%.

7
8 While these studies show some potential benefit of postpartum incentives, randomisation was
9 early in pregnancy for women who were currently smoking; therefore, it was not possible to
10 examine the separate effects of postpartum incentives on smoking cessation. Moreover, all the
11 studies were conducted in the US and all, except the study by Baker and colleagues [13], were
12 limited by small sample sizes. We are conducting a UK-based large randomised controlled trial
13 (RCT), which is the first to examine the specific effect of postpartum financial incentives on rates
14 of postpartum relapse to smoking, among women who received incentives in pregnancy, were
15 confirmed as abstinent at end-of-pregnancy and at that time were randomised to receive
16 incentives or no incentives.

18 **Objectives {7}**

19 **Primary Objective**

20 The primary objective of this three-arm RCT is to assess the effectiveness of offering financial
21 incentives to help women who are abstinent from smoking at end of pregnancy to avoid return to
22 smoking up to 12 months postpartum.

23

24

1 **Hypotheses**

2 There are four hypotheses relating to the primary objective:

3 (i) That an intervention offering twelve months of postpartum financial incentives will be
4 significantly more effective for aiding smoking cessation up to 12 months postpartum than a no
5 incentives condition.

6 (ii) That an intervention offering three months of postpartum incentives will be significantly more
7 effective for aiding smoking cessation up to 12 months postpartum than a no incentives condition.

8 (iii) That an intervention offering 12 months of postpartum incentives will be significantly more
9 effective for aiding smoking cessation up to 12 months postpartum than an intervention offering
10 three months of postpartum incentives.

11 (iv) That there will be a significant linear trend in smoking cessation across the three study groups,
12 with rates of abstinence increasing from the no incentives group, to the three months incentives
13 group, to the 12-month incentives group.

14

15 **Secondary Objectives**

16 The secondary objectives are:

- 17 • To assess the effectiveness of offering financial incentives to help women maintain smoking
18 abstinence until at least three months after birth of the infant.
- 19 • To assess whether financial incentives are cost effective in terms of incremental cost per
20 quitter at 12 months postpartum.
- 21 • To identify the effects of maternal characteristics (e.g., cigarette consumption before
22 pregnancy) and type of smoking cessation services (i.e., midwife led or not) on the
23 effectiveness of the intervention.

- 1 • To explore participant’s and intervention provider’s experiences of, and views on, the
2 intervention and research procedures, in order to identify the barriers and facilitators to
3 trial/intervention retention, effectiveness and implementation.

4

5 **Trial design {8}**

6 This study is a multi-centre, three-arm, superiority, parallel group, individually randomised
7 controlled trial, with 1:1:1 allocation, designed to test the effectiveness of offering financial
8 incentives to help women, who are abstinent from smoking at end of pregnancy, to avoid
9 returning to smoking up to 12 months postpartum. In addition, an economic evaluation will assess
10 the cost-effectiveness of offering financial incentives, and a qualitative process evaluation will
11 examine barriers and facilitators to trial retention, effectiveness and implementation.

12

13 **Methods: Participants, interventions and outcomes**

14 **Study setting {9}**

15 Study participants will be recruited from stop smoking services (SSS) serving maternity hospitals in
16 four UK National Health Service (NHS) hospital Trusts in Greater Manchester. All participating
17 Trusts cover large areas of deprivation and include a city, several provincial towns, suburban and
18 rural areas. This diversity facilitates recruitment of women from different socio-economic
19 backgrounds. Each of these sites have different SSS configurations offering their own care
20 pathway within the framework of the UK National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE)
21 guidance [15]. This includes NHS/local authority-run services, generic/specialist pregnancy
22 services, midwifery/SSS advisor-led services, and represents most UK usual care pathways for
23 smoking cessation in pregnancy. This also includes multiple care settings, from low risk midwifery

1 led care to high risk tertiary units. The total deliveries per year at the four Trusts in 2019-2020 was
2 28, 270, ranging from 2230 births in the smallest Trust to 12,150 in the largest Trust.

3

4 **Eligibility criteria {10}**

5 **Site eligibility: Current routine care for smoking cessation in pregnancy**

6 Study sites are only eligible if they are currently offering the Smokefree Pregnancy Programme in
7 Greater Manchester, which incorporates an offer of financial incentives for biochemically
8 validated smoking abstinence through to the end of pregnancy. This section describes this routine
9 smoking cessation care which is offered in Greater Manchester.

10

11 This programme includes 'BabyClear' [16], which implements UK guidance [15] around smoking in
12 pregnancy, as well as linking NHS Trusts who provide antenatal care and community-based
13 providers of smoking cessation support. Training is provided for maternity staff, smoking cessation
14 advisors and administrators within smoking cessation services. Midwives are trained to use CO
15 monitoring for all women at the first antenatal appointment, with routine opt-out referral for
16 smoking cessation support for any woman with a CO recording above 3 ppm. Babyclear also
17 includes an enhanced 'risk perception' intervention for women who continue to smoke at their
18 first trimester ultrasound scan appointment, at around 12 weeks gestation.

19

20 Women who report currently smoking, or having stopped smoking in the last two weeks, and have
21 an expired CO reading > 3ppm are offered regular (at least four weekly) support from a stop
22 smoking advisor. Women can be referred by maternity services to receive this support or can self-
23 refer. Expired CO is routinely tested at all smoking cessation appointments and stopping smoking
24 is facilitated at the earliest possible point in pregnancy, with routes back into support at any point

1 of relapse. The latest point at which a women can begin a quit attempt, as part of Babyclear, is at
2 32 weeks gestation.

3
4 In addition to Babyclear, all the women in the pregnancy programme are offered a financial
5 incentives scheme. This scheme is routine care and is not part of the intervention for the trial. For
6 the first four weeks women are offered a £10 'Love2Shop' voucher (redeemable in many UK retail
7 outlets) per week and then a £20 voucher each month, up to 36 weeks gestation. This is
8 conditional on the woman reporting lapse free abstinence since their quit date and having an
9 expired CO reading of <4ppm. Additionally, participating women are given the option to recruit a
10 'Significant Other Supporter' (SOS) (a member of their community who agrees to support the
11 woman to remain smoke free, including attending cessation support sessions) who is entitled to
12 receive a £60 Love2Shop voucher if the woman remains quit at 36 weeks gestation and the SOS is
13 also confirmed as abstinent (CO<8ppm). If a woman relapses to smoking and agrees to set a new
14 quit, she can be re-recruited into the incentives scheme, up to 32 weeks gestation. If she relapses
15 a second time she is no longer eligible to participate in the scheme and is offered support outside
16 the scheme. In cases of miscarriage, premature birth or stillbirth the woman is no longer eligible
17 for the incentives scheme and is offered cessation support outside of the scheme.

18
19 As part of this routine support all women are also given brief advice about maintaining abstinence
20 postpartum and in the long-term.

21

22 **Participant eligibility**

23 Women who have undergone the above Smokefree Pregnancy Programme in Greater Manchester
24 will be eligible to join the study if they meet the following inclusion criteria: are between 34 weeks

1 gestation and two weeks postpartum, confirm having not smoked a single puff of a cigarette for at
2 least four weeks, expired carbon monoxide (CO) reading < 4 parts per million (ppm), aged at least
3 16 years, intend remaining abstinent from smoking after the birth (or to continue remaining
4 abstinent if recruited postpartum), able to speak and read English and be willing and able to give
5 written informed consent for participation in the study. If the participant is required to use a
6 single-person, self-administered carbon monoxide (iCO) monitor (i.e., during COVID-19
7 restrictions), they require a device (e.g., phone) that is compatible with the monitor app.

8
9 *Rationale for CO cut-off of < 4ppm:* During pregnancy, when metabolism is higher and there are
10 respiratory changes, a CO cut-off of <4ppm is recommended [17, 18]. Whereas out of pregnancy a
11 cut-off of <8ppm is more standard [19]. Therefore, for eligibility we used a criteria of < 4ppm. It is
12 not clear whether metabolism and respiratory function would have returned to non-pregnant
13 levels during the first two weeks postpartum compared with pregnancy; therefore we will apply
14 the CO cut-off of < 4ppm equally to women who are recruited in late pregnancy and to women
15 who are recruited in the first two weeks postpartum.

16
17 There is recent evidence that the iCO monitor can produce a slightly higher CO reading than more
18 conventional CO monitors [20]. However, the iCO has not been compared with other monitors
19 during pregnancy, therefore we retained the cut-off of <4ppm for the iCO during testing for
20 eligibility.

21 22 **Who will take informed consent? {26a}**

23 All women confirmed as abstinent by their stop smoking service (SSS) advisor at around 36 weeks
24 gestation (acceptable range: 34 weeks gestation to two weeks postpartum), and meeting other

1 eligibility criteria, will be invited by their advisor to join the study. The SSS advisor will explain that
2 we are running an RCT examining the effects of offering shopping vouchers on women’s smoking
3 cessation during the 12 months after their baby is born. If a face-to-face appointment is possible
4 at this time, the SSS will ask women for their written informed consent to participate in the trial.
5 They will also ask for their consent to be contacted after the 12 months follow-up to be invited to
6 take part in an interview to discuss their experience of the trial. It will be made clear that women
7 can participate in the trial without consenting to be interviewed and that this will not affect their
8 participation in the trial or the usual care that they receive.

9

10 All women who are eligible and have provided consent to participate in the trial will be
11 randomised to one of the three study groups. After women are randomised they will be given an
12 additional PIS describing the specific study group they have been allocated to.

13

14 All SSS staff will attend a half-day session, delivered by a member of the research team, to be
15 informed about the trial and to be trained in taking consent, delivering the intervention, and other
16 research procedures.

17

18 *‘Distanced’ consent methods*

19 Due to COVID-19 restrictions on face-to-face contact, the following provisions have been made:

20 Potential participants can be contacted at around 32 weeks and 36 weeks gestation by phone, as
21 well as face-to-face. The participant information sheet and consent form can be sent to
22 participants by post, email or via a web-link embedded within a text message. Women will be
23 offered several ‘distanced’ methods for providing informed consent:

24 1. To post the completed written consent form to a researcher or SSS before being randomised.

1 2. To take a photo or scan of their completed written consent form and texting or emailing it to a
2 researcher or SSS advisor.
3 3. To provide verbal consent to join the trial. During the call, potential participants will give explicit
4 verbal consent to the statements on the consent form. An SSS advisor will then sign the
5 participant's consent form and check a 'tick box' which notes on the consent form that consent
6 was taken verbally by telephone.

7

8 *Justification for distanced consent methods*

9 We believe it is ethical to use the 'distanced' consent methods described above and they have
10 received ethical approval. If all participants are required to receive, sign and return signed consent
11 forms, this will result in many women, who wish to join the trial, not returning signed
12 confirmation. For example, women may be socially isolating and do not wish to leave their homes
13 to post the consent form or they may not have the facility to transfer the completed form
14 electronically. In this circumstance adequate recruitment and, hence, a robust evaluation would
15 be difficult. Moreover, a 'hard-to-reach' group would lose the potential to benefit from
16 participation in the trial.

17

18 **Additional consent provisions for collection and use of participant data and biological specimens**

19 **{26b}**

20 No additional consent provisions are required.

21

22 **Interventions**

23 **Explanation for the choice of comparators {6b}**

24 Those in the 'no incentives' control group will receive postpartum care as usual, except, as for all

1 participants, they will be offered a £20 voucher payment, at both 3 months and 12 months
2 postpartum, as a gesture of thanks for completing a follow-up assessment. During pregnancy all
3 women receive routine care for smoking cessation in pregnancy, including the offer of incentives,
4 as described in section {10}. This includes brief advice about maintaining abstinence postpartum
5 and in the long-term. Other than this, currently there is no routine, postpartum relapse prevention
6 support offered to women or partners who have quit smoking before or during pregnancy.

7

8 **Intervention description {11a}.**

9 There are two intervention/incentive groups. The incentive payments are in the form of
10 Love2Shop gift cards that can be redeemed in a wide variety of UK shops.

11

12 **During COVID-19 restrictions on face-to-face contact** participants will attend appointments
13 remotely, via telephone, rather than face-to-face and smoking cessation status will be assessed
14 remotely. See section {12} for details of ‘Assessing smoking cessation outcomes during COVID-19
15 restrictions on face-to-face contact’.

16

17 **Intervention group 1: Incentives are offered up to three months postpartum.**

18 This intervention is provided in addition to the usual care as received by the ‘no incentives’ group.

19 *Payments to participants:* Participants are offered a total of £60 of incentive payments. An
20 incentive of £20 is offered at each of the visits at one, two and three months postpartum.

21 Payments are conditional on self-report of not smoking a single puff of a cigarette since their last
22 quit date in pregnancy and an expired CO reading of <8ppm. This intervention was chosen because
23 it has been used previously in the UK, including in Greater Manchester, and has been shown to be
24 acceptable to postpartum women and SSS advisors [21].

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Payments to Significant Other Supporter: Participants will also be given the option to identify a ‘Significant Other Supporter’ (SOS) (a member of their community who agrees to support the woman to remain smoke free, including attending smoking cessation validation visits). The women’s SOS will be offered an incentive of £60 if the woman achieves CO validated abstinence at three months postpartum and the SOS is also confirmed as abstinent (CO<8ppm), irrespective of whether the SOS has been a smoker. During the period of COVID-19 restrictions on face-to-face contact the SOS will be confirmed as abstinent based on self-report alone. Previously, SOS payments have been shown to be acceptable to postpartum women and their partners in the UK [21] and elsewhere [9].

The total value of incentives offered to this group, including payments to the participant (£60) and the SOS (£60), is £120.

Intervention group 2: Incentives are offered up to 12 months postpartum.

This intervention is provided in addition to the usual care as received by the ‘no incentives’ group. In addition to all the incentives offered to group 1, those in this group are offered £60 at each of the visits at six, nine and 12 months postpartum. Again, payments are dependent on expired CO confirmation of self-reported abstinence.

The total value of incentives offered to this group, including those offered to the participant (£240) and SOS (£60), is £300. This intervention was devised specifically for this study, in order to examine the potential benefit of continuing the offer of incentives, at three-month intervals, up to the primary end-point at 12 months postpartum.

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To our knowledge, neither of the incentive interventions has been previously tested in a research study. The level of incentives offered in the interventions are between the lowest level suggested by the general public that might be effective (£20 per month) and the highest acceptable level (£80 per month), for during pregnancy [22].

Behavioural support for intervention groups: In both intervention groups the SSS advisor provides only behavioural support that is integral to the incentives intervention. In total, the interventions include the following four behaviour change techniques (BCTs), as defined by a standard taxonomy of BCTs [23], and the numbering is that used in the taxonomy:

10.1 *Material incentive (behavior)*: Inform that a financial incentive will be offered if the participant and SOS reports not smoking and has a CO < 8ppm.

1.3 *Goal setting (outcome)*: Set a goal of not smoking a single puff of a cigarette until the next assessment.

2.6 *Biofeedback*: Inform the person of their expired CO reading.

10.4 *Social reward*: SSS congratulates person if they remain abstinent from smoking.

Payments for attending assessments: In addition, in order to maximise completion of follow-ups, all participants are offered a £20 voucher payment, for completing a follow-up assessment at both 3 months and 12 months postpartum (i.e., £20 for each assessment).

1 **Criteria for discontinuing or modifying allocated interventions {11b}**

2 There are no special criteria for discontinuing or modifying allocated interventions.

3 Participants may choose to stop attending appointments and receiving incentive payments for any
4 reason.

5

6 **Strategies to improve adherence to interventions {11c}**

7 None beyond the brief behavioural support describe in {11a}.

8

9 **Relevant concomitant care permitted or prohibited during the trial {11d}**

10 Trial participants are permitted to receive relapse prevention support, during postpartum, beyond
11 that provided by the intervention and any additional support is recorded.

12

13 **Provisions for post-trial care {30}**

14 None, beyond standard care within the NHS.

15

16 **Outcomes {12}**

17 At the 3 and 12 months postpartum follow-ups, women will initially be assessed for smoking
18 status over the phone (up to five attempts will be made to call them) by their stop smoking service
19 (SSS) advisor or by a researcher. Those who report having not smoked a single puff of a cigarette
20 since their last quit date in pregnancy will be asked to attend a face-to-face appointment with
21 their SSS advisor to confirm their smoking status, or to confirm their smoking status by remote
22 means (see section below 'Assessing smoking cessation outcomes during COVID-19 restrictions on
23 face-to-face contact).

24

1 **Primary outcome measure**

2 The primary outcome is self-reported, lapse-free, smoking abstinence from the last quit attempt in
3 pregnancy until 12 months postpartum, biochemically validated by an exhaled CO reading of
4 <8ppm, and/or saliva cotinine or anabasine estimation. The proportion of abstinent women will be
5 compared between the two intervention groups and between each intervention group and the
6 control group. During pregnancy, due to physiological changes including higher metabolism [24], a
7 CO cut-off of <4ppm is recommended [17, 18]. Whereas out of pregnancy a cut-off of <8ppm is
8 more standard [19].

9
10 Where the expired CO reading is <8ppm, or a CO reading is not available, and the cotinine level is
11 ≤ 12 ng/ml [25] the participant is defined as a biochemically verified as abstinent. Where the CO
12 reading is <8ppm, or a CO reading is not available, and the cotinine level is >12 ng/ml and the
13 participant reports use of nicotine replacement therapy, e-cigarettes or heat-not-burn products,
14 then saliva samples will be also tested for anabasine. Where the anabasine result is ≤ 0.2 ng/ml
15 [26] then the participant will be defined as a biochemically verified as abstinent.

16
17 **Secondary outcome measures**

18 As a secondary outcome we will assess self-reported, lapse-free, smoking abstinence from the last
19 quit attempt in pregnancy until three months postpartum, biochemically validated by an exhaled
20 CO reading of <8ppm. Again, the proportion of abstinent women will be compared between the
21 intervention and control groups.

22

1 If a participant is recorded as having relapsed at three months postpartum, they will be
2 automatically recorded as having relapsed for the primary outcome at 12 months postpartum, and
3 will not be followed up at 12 months.

4

5 **Assessing smoking cessation outcomes during COVID-19 restrictions on face-to-face contact**

6 During COVID-19, for the three and 12-month postpartum outcomes for smoking cessation, if it is
7 not possible to take an expired CO reading during a face-to-face visit, participants will take a CO
8 reading using a self-administered/single person use device ((iCO™ Smokerlyzer, Bedfont Scientific
9 Ltd.) [27] and send the CO reading to the stop smoking advisor via an app. There is recent
10 evidence that the iCO monitor can produce a slightly higher CO reading than more conventional
11 CO monitors [20]. However, the authors of this study recommend an optimal cut-off for the iCO of
12 <6ppm, therefore we decided to retain our more liberal cut-off of <8ppm.

13

14 If a participant joined the trial before the COVID-19 restrictions, and therefore was not sent a self-
15 administered CO monitor when they were recruited and a face-to-face CO reading is not possible,
16 then a CO reading will not be collected at 3 or 12 months follow-up; at 3 months, abstinence will
17 be self-reported alone and at 12 months self-reported abstinence will be validated, where
18 possible, by saliva cotinine or anabasine. The participant will be sent a salivette and instructions to
19 provide a saliva sample and will be advised how to take a saliva sample during the follow-up call
20 with the stop smoking advisor. The participant will then be asked to post the saliva sample to a
21 laboratory for analysis (ABS Laboratories, Hertfordshire, UK,
22 <https://www.acmgloballab.com/about-us/our-locations/europe-london-uk>). The follow-up
23 questionnaires will be administered by the participant's stop smoking advisor over the phone.

1 When the COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted we will give participants the option of continuing
2 with the above approach or they can choose to have face-to-face appointments.

3

4 **Economic measures**

5 We will examine the incremental cost per quitter for the financial incentive interventions versus
6 the no incentives group. We will collect resource and cost data (i.e., financial incentives, stop
7 smoking service delivery) as well as considering rates of smoking cessation.

8

9 **Process evaluation**

10 The process evaluation will collect quantitative data on recruitment and follow-up rates. In
11 addition, qualitative data will be collected via a focus group with SSS advisors/managers delivering
12 the intervention and through interviews with trial participants. This qualitative work will identify
13 barriers and facilitators to trial recruitment and adherence and explore the acceptability of study
14 processes and procedures. Full details of the process evaluation are reported in Additional file 1.

15 **Other measures**

16 In a baseline questionnaire, administered by the SSS advisor after the women are recruited, we
17 will assess measures which have been shown to predict postpartum smoking relapse [28] and
18 which we would want to ensure are similar for the three study groups, as potential confounders of
19 any effects on smoking cessation. These measures are:

- 20 • Age
- 21 • Ethnicity
- 22 • Highest educational qualification
- 23 • Occupation
- 24 • Gestation

- 1 • Level of cigarette consumption before pregnancy
- 2 • Expired CO level in ppm
- 3 • Parity (i.e., number of previous pregnancies that have gone beyond 24 weeks)
- 4 • Assessment of smoking in the home and of whether partner smokes
- 5 • Length of time since last smoking (Months/weeks)
- 6 • Self-efficacy: Rating of “How confident are you that you will continue not to smoke at least until
- 7 your baby’s first birthday?” (Not at all confident, Slightly confident, Moderately confident, Very
- 8 confident, Extremely confident) [29]
- 9 • Depression: Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale [30] (For the item “The thought of harming
- 10 myself has occurred to me” if women respond “Yes, quite often” or “sometimes” they will be
- 11 referred to their health visitor, Family Nurse Partnership or GP).
- 12 • Breastfeeding intent [31]
- 13 • Alcohol consumption: Alcohol Use Disorders Identification-Consumption (AUDIT-C) test [32,33]
- 14 • Use of support for smoking cessation beyond what is provided in the trial.
- 15 • Whether they recruited a significant other supporter (SOS) during their pregnancy.
- 16 • Use of nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) in the last week and main types of NRT used.
- 17 • Use of heat not burn products in the last week.
- 18 • Use of e-cigarettes in the last week.

19 In addition, we will assess self-reports of any use of the iCO single person use CO monitor outside
20 of scheduled assessments at three and 12 months.

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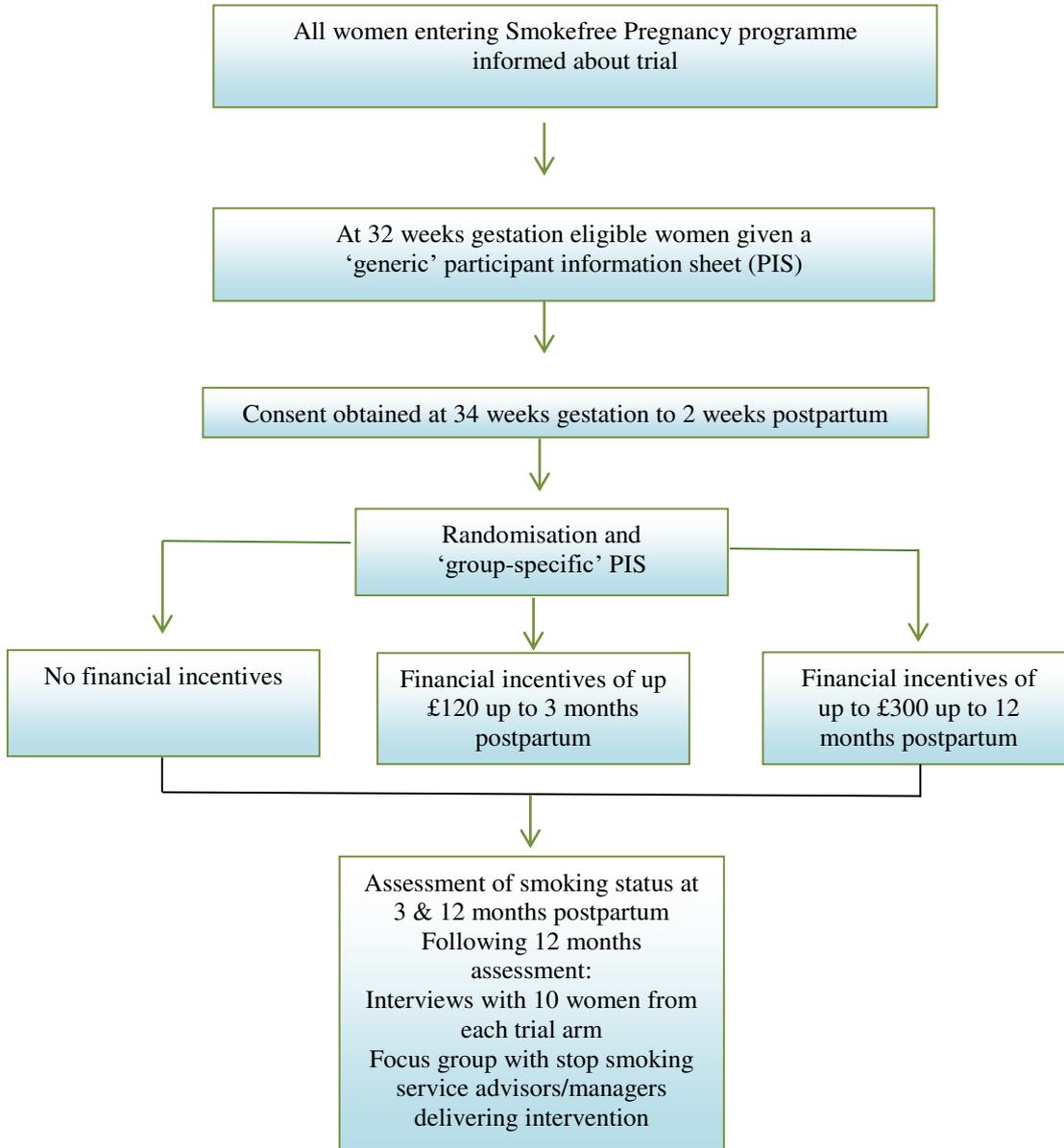
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1 **Participant timeline {13}**

2

3 **Figure 1. Trial flow diagram**

4



1 **Sample size {14}**

2 We estimate that the proposed sample size of 900 women will give 90% power at an alpha
3 threshold of 0.017 to detect a difference in abstinence rates across any two groups of 13.6% at 12
4 month follow up. It is anticipated that the abstinence rate in the control group will be 9% at 12
5 month follow up, that there will be 22.6% abstinence at 12 months follow up in the 3 month
6 incentives group and 36.2% abstinence at 12 months follow up in the 12 months incentives group.
7 The figure of 9% in the no incentives group is conservatively based on the assumption that over
8 90% of women without incentives may relapse by 12 months postpartum [3]. The estimate of
9 13.6% difference is based on the group difference found by Tappin and colleagues in a study of
10 incentives during pregnancy [34]. The threshold for alpha is reduced to 0.017 to correct for
11 multiplicity and allow comparisons across the three arms.

12
13 **Recruitment {15}**

14 At the time that women join the Smokefree Pregnancy programme, which is most commonly
15 following their first antenatal booking visit at 8-12 weeks gestation, they will be informed by their
16 stop smoking service (SSS) advisor that those who are confirmed as abstinent from smoking at
17 around 36 weeks gestation (acceptable range: 34 weeks gestation to 2 weeks postpartum) will be
18 offered the opportunity to join a research study in which they may or may not be offered shopping
19 vouchers to remain abstinent through 12 months postpartum.

20
21 Women confirmed as abstinent (CO <4ppm) by their SSS at around 32 weeks gestation will be
22 given or sent a 'generic' participant information sheet (PIS) about the study. We decided to first
23 provide a generic PIS, explaining that incentives may or may not be offered, but not giving the
24 specific details of the three study groups, in order to reduce potential dissatisfaction and dropout

1 if women are not offered the highest value of incentives. It will be explained that if they are still
2 confirmed as abstinent at their 36-week appointment, and meet other eligibility criteria, they will
3 have the opportunity to discuss the study and decide if they want to join. All women confirmed as
4 abstinent at around 36 weeks gestation by their SSS (acceptable range: 34 weeks gestation to two
5 weeks postpartum), and meeting other eligibility criteria, will be invited by their SSS advisor to join
6 the study. If women give birth before 36 weeks they will still be eligible as long they join the study
7 within two weeks of the birth of the baby and meet other eligibility criteria. The SSS advisor will
8 explain that we are running an RCT examining the effects of offering shopping vouchers on
9 women's smoking cessation during the 12 months after their baby is born and seek consent to
10 participate. See {26a} for a description of the consent process.

11

12 A screening form will be completed by the SSS advisor to record number of women approached,
13 eligibility, number of women declining to take part, and reasons for declining, if women are willing
14 to provide this information.

15

16 If a face-to-face visit and/or multiple use CO test is not possible (e.g., in order to maintain social
17 distancing) the CO reading to determine eligibility will be taken by a single-person, self-
18 administered CO monitor, posted to the woman following her appointment at 32 week's
19 gestation, and used by the woman at home (iCO™ Smokerlyzer, Bedfont Scientific Ltd. [27]). The
20 CO reading will be transferred to the SSS advisor using an app. Women who do not have a device
21 (e.g., phone) that is compatible with this app will not be eligible to join the trial. The baseline
22 questionnaire will be administered by the stop smoking advisor over the phone. When the COVID-
23 19 restrictions have been lifted we will give participants the option of continuing with the above
24 approach or they can choose to have face-to-face appointments.

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Details of those consenting to participate in the trial will be entered by the SSS advisor on to a secure University of Stirling online server which will generate a randomisation code. Some participants may be disappointed not to be allocated to one of the incentives groups and the SSS advisors will be trained to respond appropriately to this.

The patient's clinical care team (e.g., midwife, health visitor, GP) will already have been made aware that the woman is taking part in the Greater Manchester Smokefree Pregnancy programme, therefore we will not be sending a separate letter to patient's general physicians (GPs) when they join the trial.

Assignment of interventions: allocation

Sequence generation {16a}

Randomisation and allocation will be carried out by the trial statistician (CB) at the University of Stirling using STATA, with randomised permuted blocks and stratified by site (i.e., hospital trust). Unit of randomisation will be individual participant, allocated in a ratio of 1:1:1 to the two intervention groups or control group. Following completion of the baseline questionnaire, details of women who consent to participate will be entered by the SSS advisor into a University of Stirling secure online server (i.e., randomisation date, participant birth date, participant initials and site). The SSS will then be automatically informed of the women's unique participant number and treatment allocation and this information will be given to the participant. Selection bias will be minimised by ensuring all consenting women have equal opportunity of being allocated to each of the study arms.

1 **Concealment mechanism {16b}**

2 Randomisation will use a web-based randomisation system.

3

4 **Implementation {16c}**

5 SSS advisors at each site will enrol participants and request the group allocation.

6

7 **Assignment of interventions: Blinding**

8 **Who will be blinded {17a}**

9 Due to the nature of the intervention, participants and the SSS advisors delivering the intervention
10 will not be blinded to the treatment received. Nor will SSS advisors or researchers who ascertain
11 smoking status at three and 12 months postpartum be blinded; however, there is low risk of bias
12 as smoking status is biochemically validated. Those involved in the data analyses and will be
13 blinded to the group allocation.

14

15 **Procedure for unblinding if needed {17b}**

16 Participants and SSS staff delivering the intervention are not blinded.

17

18 **Data collection and management**

19 **Plans for assessment and collection of outcomes {18a}**

20 Data will be collected via questionnaires at baseline and at three and 12 months postpartum.

21 Questionnaires will be either self-completed by participants or, during COVID-19 restrictions, will
22 be administered by SSS advisors over the telephone. Demographic information will be collected at
23 baseline via questionnaire. CO readings will be collected at baseline and at three and 12 months
24 postpartum during a face-to-face visit or, during COVID-19 restrictions, remotely via an app. For

1 those who report smoking abstinence at 12 months postpartum saliva, for cotinine/anabasine
 2 testing, will be collected face-to-face or, during COVID-19 restrictions, saliva collection kits will be
 3 posted to participants and participants will post the saliva sample to the laboratory.

4

5 **Table 1: Schedule of assessments**

6

Assessment	Baseline	3 months postpartum	12 months postpartum
Demographics: age, education, occupation, ethnicity	X		
Smoking status: self-reported	X	X	X
Time since last smoking	X		
Expired CO level in ppm	X	X	X
Use of iCO single person use CO monitor outside of assessments: self-reported		X	X
Cigarette consumption before pregnancy	X		
Self-efficacy for smoking cessation	X		
Use of nicotine products	X	X	X
Smoking in the home	X	X	X
Partner smoking status	X	X	X
Use of additional smoking cessation support	X	X	X

Whether they have a significant other supporter (SOS)	X		
Gestation	X		
Parity	X		
Breastfeeding intent	X		
Depression (Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale)	X		
Alcohol consumption: Alcohol Use Disorders Identification-Consumption (AUDIT-C) test	X		
Expired CO level in ppm	X	X	X
Saliva for cotinine/anabasine test			X

1

2 **Plans to promote participant retention and complete follow-up {18b}**

3 In order to maximise the number of participants who complete follow-ups, especially among those
4 in the control group and those who have relapsed to smoking, all participants will be offered a £20
5 voucher payment, for completing a follow-up assessment at both 3 months and 12 months
6 postpartum (i.e., £20 for each assessment). The assessment includes completion of a
7 questionnaire and biochemical assessment of smoking status. A previous UK trial of incentives for
8 smoking cessation in pregnancy showed that such a payment motivates women to attend follow-
9 ups [29]. Telephone contact for follow-up will be attempted on up to five occasions. If a
10 participant has been asked to post a saliva sample to the laboratory and the saliva sample has not
11 arrive the participant will be contacted and reminded to send the sample.

12

13

14

1 **Data management {19}**

2 All trial participants are given an individual trial number which will be used on all case
3 report forms (CRF) for that participant. Researchers at the University of Stirling will enter data
4 from CRFs into the secure trial database. To check for systematic errors, double data entry will be
5 conducted for a random selection of 10% of CRFs. University of Stirling researchers will review
6 CRFs and the database for range errors and for missing data.

7

8 **Confidentiality {27}**

9 All collected information will be kept strictly confidential and will be stored in accordance
10 with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the latest Directive
11 on Good Clinical Practice (GCP). Confidentiality of patient's personal data is ensured by not
12 collecting patient names on CRFs and limiting access to personal information held on the
13 databases. At trial enrolment the participant will be issued a participant identification number and
14 this will be the primary identifier for the participant, with secondary identifiers of month and year
15 of birth and initials. Any paper copies of personal trial data will be kept at the participating site in
16 a secure location with restricted access. Following consent, identifiable data will be kept in a
17 secure database at each site and at the University of Stirling, to allow authorised members of the
18 site team to contact participants in order to arrange appointments/assessments.

19 Any paper copies of consent form, with patient name and signature, will be kept securely at the
20 trial site with a copy sent to the University of Stirling for monitoring purposes. Consent forms will
21 not be kept with any additional patient data.

22

23

24

1 **Plans for collection, laboratory evaluation and storage of biological specimens for genetic or**
2 **molecular analysis in this trial/future use {33}**

3 None

4

5 **Statistical methods**

6 **Statistical methods for primary and secondary outcomes {20a}**

7 The plan for statistical analysis is reported here in accordance with guidance for RCTS [35,36].

8 We will use descriptive statistics to present the baseline characteristics of the three study groups.

9 Descriptive statistics will also be used to report rates of recruitment, retention and follow-up at
10 three months and 12 months post-partum.

11

12 Analyses of smoking status, for primary and secondary outcomes, will be performed for the
13 intention-to-treat population and reported in accordance with the Consolidated Standards of
14 Reporting Trials (CONSORT) statement [37,38], including all women who are randomised and meet
15 the eligibility criteria. If ineligible persons are mistakenly randomised into the trial the
16 independent trial steering committee will review the case for removing the patient from the
17 analysis, such that this decision is unbiased and not influenced by events that occurred after
18 randomisation (and may therefore be affected by whether patients received experimental or
19 control treatment) [39].

20

21 Women lost to follow-up will be presumed to have returned to smoking [19]. This assumption is
22 standard in the smoking cessation literature as the pattern of missingness is not random. We will
23 compare differences in smoking cessation outcomes between all three treatment groups, using
24 logistic regression adjusted for the random effect of site (i.e., NHS Trust), with statistical

1 significance determined by the likelihood-ratio test, and with pairwise comparisons between
2 treatment groups in accordance with the study objectives, using a p value of 0.017 adjusted for
3 the three comparisons. The estimate of effect will be given as the odds ratio and 95% confidence
4 interval for each of the three comparisons. We will also look for a linear trend in smoking
5 cessation across the three groups, by examining the significance of a linear contrast across the
6 groups from control to 12-month intervention.

7

8 All outcomes will be analysed collectively following the completion of the final follow-up at 12
9 months postpartum. A more detailed statistical analysis plan will be agreed to before the end of
10 data entry and before the treatment code is broken.

11

12 **Interim analyses {21b}**

13 There will be no interim analyses.

14

15 **Methods for additional analyses (e.g. subgroup analyses) {20b}**

16 We will conduct a secondary-analyses adjusting for key maternal variables that are predicted to be
17 related to smoking status (i.e., socio-economic status, cigarette consumption before pregnancy,
18 depression, and age) and type of smoking cessation service (midwife-led or not) [40]. We will also
19 conduct sensitivity analysis to examine the effects of remote (i.e., during COVID-19) versus face-
20 to-face consultations. We will also consider whether the women have been supported by a
21 significant other.

22

23

24

1 **Economic analysis**

2 An incremental cost-effectiveness analysis will be undertaken, following the NICE guidance for
3 health-care evaluations [41,42], comparing the additional costs of the financial incentive
4 interventions with those of the no incentives group, as well as the additional benefits, to give a
5 cost per additional quitter. The economic evaluation will use resource and cost data (i.e., financial
6 incentives, Stop Smoking Service delivery) as well as rates of smoking cessation.

7

8 We will document resources consumed that are related to each intervention, including the cost of
9 personnel, staff training, materials, space, equipment, and administrative overheads, as well as
10 the costs of the financial incentives. Data collection methods will include: (i) accounting for staff
11 time using time and effort reports, (ii) accounting for computer time, mailing, and program costs
12 using an accounting system that has been created to facilitate real-time aggregation of these
13 costs, and (iii) using information gathered in the focus group with staff to determine the amount
14 of time they devote to tasks related to the incentives intervention. All resources identified during
15 the study will be valued using appropriate local and national unit cost data. The values used will be
16 the most up to date at time of analysis, if unit cost data are obtained from more than one year
17 then appropriate inflators will be used to transform costs into a common cost year.

18

19 The analysis will adopt a 'within trial' approach (i.e.; up to the 12 months follow-up point of the
20 trial). The main outcome measure used in the economic analysis will be the study's primary
21 outcome measure, lapse-free, biochemically validated smoking abstinence at 12 months
22 postpartum. This will allow us to examine incremental cost per additional quitter. Multiple
23 imputation will account for missing data assuming data are missing at random, so that missingness
24 can be predicted by other complete cases.

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Costs and effects will be analysed using regression-based methods to allow for any differences in baseline characteristics. Incremental costs and effects will be reported. Additionally, if one group is more costly and more effective than the other we will report incremental cost-effectiveness ratios (ICERs). Non-parametric bootstrapping will be used to analyse uncertainty. Uncertainty inherent in the data will be represented by means of a cost-effectiveness acceptability curve (CEAC). Analyses will be performed using MS Excel, SPSS, and STATA.

Process evaluation analysis

Full details of the process evaluation analysis are reported in Additional file 1.
The relationship between the quantitative and qualitative data will be examined [42].

Methods in analysis to handle protocol non-adherence and any statistical methods to handle missing data {20c}

We will use chi-squared tests to compare follow-up rates between the three study groups to establish whether there is differential drop out. We will then explore the effect of alternative assumptions about the pattern of missing data, through complete case analysis, and through using imputation methods [43].
We will report withdrawal from the intervention and from the study and reasons for withdrawal, where known.

Plans to give access to the full protocol, participant level-data and statistical code {31c}

This document is the full protocol. To access the participant-level dataset or statistical code. please contact the corresponding author (MU).

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Oversight and monitoring

Composition of the coordinating centre and trial steering committee {5d}

The Chief Investigator (CI) will have overall responsibility for the study and its management. The Trial Management Group (TMG) at the University of Stirling, including the CI, a statistician, data manager and researcher, will be responsible for the day-to-day running of the trial, as well as overseeing data management and analyses. The TMG will meet as needed and will be supported by and report to a Trial Steering Committee (TSC). The TSC will have an independent chairperson and members but also include the TMG, other trial investigators and a representative of the funders. The TSC will meet every six months and more often if required. In addition, the site Principal Investigators (PIs) will meet with the Chief Investigator (CI) every three months to discuss progress. The CI will send a monthly newsletter, including recruitment and follow-up rates, to the TMG, to all co-investigators and to all site staff.

Composition of the data monitoring committee, its role and reporting structure {21a}

A separate Data Monitoring and Ethics Committee is not judged necessary, as we cannot envisage the intervention having the potential to harm participants.

Adverse event reporting and harms {22}

It is not considered necessary to record or report adverse events as the intervention being tested involves the offer of financial incentives (Lovetoshop vouchers) which could not be a contributory factor in adverse events.

1 **Frequency and plans for auditing trial conduct {23}**

2 The Trial Steering Committee will meet at least every six months to audit trial conduct and
3 progress. This will include independent monitoring of: adherence to the study protocol; approving
4 changes to the study protocol; reviewing quality assurance indicators; monitoring study
5 recruitment and the overall timetable; advising, as required, on specific scientific items that may
6 arise; compliance with legislation; adherence to research governance; reporting to funders; and
7 approving publication and dissemination strategies.

8
9 **Plans for communicating important protocol amendments to relevant parties (e.g. trial
10 participants, ethical committees) {25}**

11 Amendments will be approved by the research ethics committee and Health Research Authority.
12 Funders, sponsors and NHS Research and Development Offices will be routinely informed of any
13 amendments.

14
15 **Dissemination plans {31a}**

16 In addition to journal publications and conference presentations, we will develop a
17 publication and dissemination policy and will discuss presentations and dissemination with
18 relevant patient and clinical interest groups.

19
20 **Discussion**

21 At present, the majority of women who stop smoking in pregnancy return to smoking within 12
22 months of the birth of their baby. In the UK, there is currently no standard offer of help to support
23 relapse prevention and no interventions have been shown to be effective. Incentive payments to
24 maintain abstinence from smoking may provide a substantial benefit by reducing harmful health

1 consequences for the mother and child and thereby reducing long-term health care costs. The
2 results of this definitive trial should provide sufficient data to determine whether it is effective to
3 offer financial incentives to women to help them avoid relapse to smoking. This evidence will
4 provide information required for NICE to consider recommending financial voucher incentive
5 payments to support pregnant smokers across the UK to maintain abstinence from the smoking
6 after the birth of their baby.

7

8 **Trial status**

9 The FIPPS trial is currently recruiting in four UK centres/Hospital Trusts in Greater Manchester.
10 Recruitment began in February 2019 and is due to end In August 2021, with follow-up completed
11 by September 2022. The trial has a TSC which has convened five times. During COVID-19, due to a
12 combination of lack face-to-face screening of women’s smoking status I pregnancy and reduced
13 staffing due to illness or ‘shielding’, fewer women have joined the pregnancy cessation scheme
14 than expected and therefore there has been a smaller pool of women to screen to join the trial.
15 Thus, the trial is behind target and will not recruit the target of 900 women by August 2021. As of
16 March 31st 2021 539 women had been screened for eligibility and 374 (69%) participants had been
17 recruited. This article is based on protocol version V7.0, 16th November 2020. For the registered
18 trial protocol and updates see <https://doi.org/10.1186/ISRCTN55218215>

19

20 **Abbreviations**

21 BCT: behaviour change technique; CEAC: cost-effectiveness acceptability curve; CI: Chief
22 Investigator; CO: carbon monoxide; CONSORT: Consolidated Standards of Reporting Trials; CRF:
23 case report form; GCP: Good Clinical Practice; GDPR: General Data Protection Regulation; GP:
24 General Physicians; iCO: Bedfont single-person, self-administered carbon monoxide monitor;

1 ICERs: cost-effectiveness ratios; NICE: National Institute for Health and Care Excellence; NHS:
2 National Health Services; NRT: nicotine replacement therapy; PI: Principal Investigator; PIS:
3 participant information sheet; ppm: parts per million; REC: Research Ethics Committee; RCT:
4 randomised controlled trial; SOS: Significant Other Supporter; SSS: stop smoking service; TMT: trial
5 management team; TSC: Trial Steering Committee (TSC);

6

7 **Declarations**

8 **Acknowledgements**

9 We would like to acknowledge Jane Coyne and Fran Franklin, representatives of the funders and
10 managers of the Greater Manchester Smokefree Pregnancy programme, for their support and
11 advice throughout the trial. We would also like to thank all local Principal Investigators and site
12 staff for their commitment in recruitment for the FIPPS trial.

13

14 **Authors' contributions {31b}**

15 MU and LB conceived the study and were applicants for the funding. MU is the Chief Investigator.
16 All authors contributed to the study design and to the development of the protocol. JM and MU
17 led on process evaluation aspects of the protocol development. SL and CB are the trial statisticians
18 and led the main analysis aspects of protocol development. All authors read and approved the
19 final manuscript, adhere to the authorship guidelines of *Trials* and have agreed to publication.

20

21 **Funding {4}**

22 The trial was funded by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA). The views and
23 opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of GMCA.

24

1 **Availability of data and materials {29}**

2 Any data required to support the protocol will be supplied on request to the CI (MU).

3

4 **Ethics approval and consent to participate {24}**

5 The trial has ethical approval from North West - Liverpool Central Research Ethics Committee,
6 obtained on 11th January 2019 (18/NW/0838). Local NHS site recruitment approvals have all been
7 obtained. Written or verbal informed consent to participate will be obtained from all participants.

8

9 **Consent for publication {32}**

10 Not applicable

11

12 **Competing interests {28}**

13 On two occasions since 2008, TC has been paid to attend and present at symposia arranged by
14 Pierre Fabre Laboratories (PFL); PFL is a manufacturer of nicotine replacement therapy. All other
15 authors have no competing interests.

16

17 **Additional files**

18 Three Additional files are attached in PDF format:

19 Additional file 1: Details of the process evaluation.

20 Additional file 2: Award letter from the funder

21 Additional file 3: Letter of ethical approval

22

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Figures

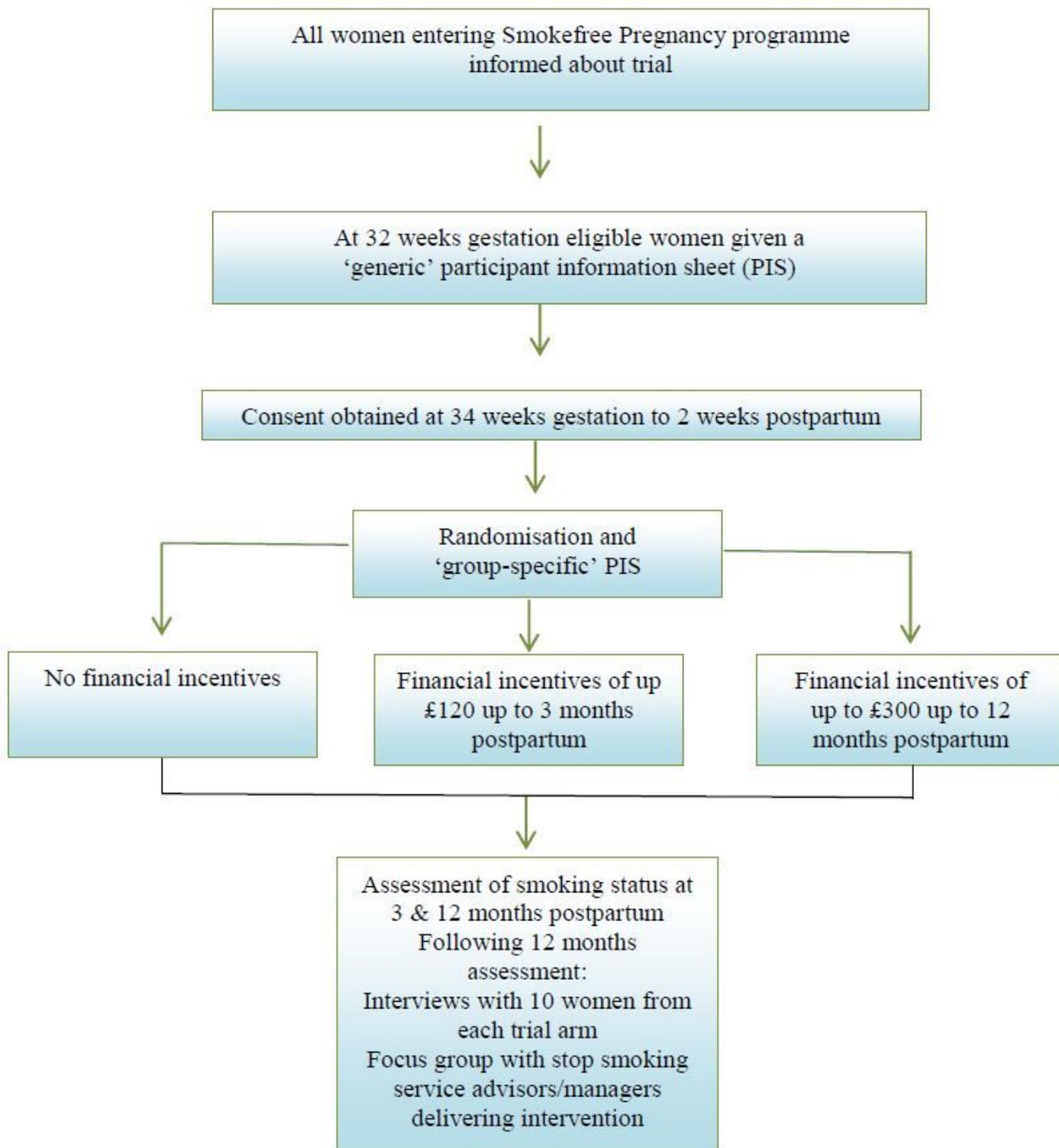


Figure 1

Trial flow diagram

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