

[Funding cut results in fewest ever attempts to quit smoking](#)

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The number of smokers who tried to kick the habit last year fell to its lowest since quit-attempt records began, as the SNP government also cut funding into a scheme to help.

According to official figures there were 59,767 attempts to stop smoking last year, half the rate of five years ago.

At the same time, cash from the Scottish Government into smoking cessation and related initiatives reduced to its lowest since 2010.

The £134,000 spent in 2016/17 compares to nearly £600,000 the year before.

Shadow health secretary Miles Briggs said while fewer people than ever now smoke in Scotland, ministers could not afford to get complacent about the issue.

Lung cancer is one of the most common causes of death in Scotland, claiming the lives of 4000 people last year.

And rates among people from deprived areas are significantly higher than in wealthier parts.

Scottish Conservative shadow health secretary Miles Briggs said:

“Scotland, like many other countries, has taken great strides in reducing smoking in recent years.

“But these figures show complacency is beginning to creep in.

“It’s clear that a significant reduction in funding for smoking cessation has coincided with a big fall in smokers who try to quit.

“It’s essential we don’t allow that to slip – quitting smoking is a very difficult thing to do and, when people want to do so, it’s important the NHS is on hand to support them.

“I hope the SNP government addresses this issue next year and places more importance on smoking cessation than it is currently doing.

“It is important to see a renewed commitment from SNP ministers and I have written to ask for answers.”