

## National Tobacco or Health Conference: Strengthening Expertise Across Regions

On 3 December 2025 more than one hundred health care and social services professionals from across Finland gathered in Helsinki for a national *Tobacco or Health Conference*, focusing on tobacco and nicotine cessation. The training brought together experts from multiple specialties in health care as well as researchers and policy makers, to share the latest research, practical tools, and strategies for supporting patients in quitting smoking and nicotine use.

The program featured welcoming addresses from decision-makers, including the Finnish Minister of Social Security and the Director General of the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare THL, followed by a panel discussion on integrating tobacco and nicotine cessation into clinical practice within different specialties. Morning sessions explored the health risks of novel nicotine products such as nicotine pouches and vapes, while the afternoon highlighted innovative cessation materials, intervention models, and research findings. Parallel sessions addressed cessation in different settings – from psychiatric hospitals to youth services – and showcased new approaches to prevention and treatment.

The event was organized as part of the JA PreventNCD project, which aims to reduce cancer and non-communicable diseases through collaborative efforts across Europe.

One highlight of the event was the launch of Filha's new materials for tobacco and nicotine cessation, developed as part of the JA PreventNCD. These resources are designed to support healthcare professionals in guiding patients towards quitting and will soon be available also in Swedish and English, ensuring broader accessibility across regions and countries. The new materials follow evidence-based guidelines and provide practical tools and communication aids to make cessation counselling more effective and consistent.

Ms Laura Rosenberg, specialist in preventive work from East Uusimaa wellbeing service county, emphasized the value of collaboration with Filha in the Joint Action:

*“Our cessation model has been developed in cooperation within the frame of JA PreventNCD, and Filha’s role has been crucial, especially in implementation. Their expert support has strengthened our capacity and communication. As a small region with limited resources, we’ve benefited greatly from shared best practices and guidance on resource allocation. While challenges have arisen, Filha’s flexibility has made the partnership work. We still have two years left in the project, and in East Uusimaa we aim to develop nicotine prevention and cessation particularly in maternity clinics and school*

*health services. At health centres, the situation is already good – a network of nurses is set up, and specialists are doing excellent work.”*

The conference day concluded with special networking sessions for JA PreventNCD partners, reinforcing the importance of collaboration and sharing experiences in addressing tobacco and nicotine use.