



NEW ZEALAND MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

28 January 2011

Health Select Committee
Parliament Buildings
Wellington

Smoke-Free Environments (Controls and Enforcement) Amendment Bill

The NZMA is New Zealand's largest medical organisation and has a pan professional membership. We have around 4500 members who come from all areas of medicine including medical students, resident medical officers, general practitioners, and other specialists.

The NZMA aims to provide leadership of the medical profession, and promote:

- professional unity and values;
- the health of all New Zealanders.

The key roles of the NZMA are to:

- provide advocacy on behalf of doctors and their patients;
- provide support and services to members and their practices;
- publish and maintain the Code of Ethics for the profession; and
- publish the New Zealand Medical Journal.

The NZMA is pleased to see the amendments proposed in the Smoke-free environments (controls and enforcement) amendment bill and strongly endorses them. As you will be aware from our previous submissions in respect of tobacco control, the NZMA is very concerned about the long term health effects of tobacco use. Any measures taken that are likely to reduce the uptake of tobacco are therefore strongly supported.

Cigarette smoking is the single largest cause of preventable death in New Zealand and causes around 4,700 avoidable deaths each year¹. Around one in five (19.9 percent) adults currently smoke.² In New Zealand, 21.1 percent of men and 18.8 percent of females currently smoke.³

Tobacco use is a risk factor for six of the eight leading causes of death globally. This includes ischaemic heart disease, cerebrovascular disease, lower respiratory infections, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), tuberculosis and lung cancer.⁴

¹ Ministry of Health. Our Health, Our Future: Hauora Pakari, Koiora Roa. Wellington: Ministry of Health; 1999.

² The current smoking prevalence is based on the definition of World Health Organization. A current smoker is someone who has smoked more than 100 cigarettes in their lifetime and currently smokes.

³ Ministry of Health. 2008. A Portrait of Health. Key Results of the 2006/07 New Zealand Health Survey. Wellington.

⁴ WHO Report on the Global Tobacco Epidemic, 2008: The MPOWER package. Geneva: World Health Organization.

In New Zealand tobacco smoking accounts for about 23 percent of all cancer deaths and 16% of deaths from all causes⁵. When risk factors are ranked, smoking is responsible for more premature death and disability than competing risks such as physical inactivity, high blood pressure, low fruit and vegetable intake, and high cholesterol.⁶

There is also good evidence that there is a social gradient in respect of smoking, with the lower the socio economic position the higher the risk that a person will smoke⁷.

At least 50 percent of all regular cigarette smokers will eventually be killed by their addiction. On average they will lose 14 years of quality life.⁸

For these reasons we support the proposals to

- remove the display of tobacco products in retail outlets.
- tighten and better enforce controls on tobacco retail sales.
- prohibit publication of retailers names that have the effect of advertising the availability of tobacco on the exterior of retail premises,
- further amend the legislation requiring all tobacco and other smoking product retailers to display the health information or warnings regarding smoking provided by the Ministry of Health.
- amend the legislation to better facilitate the enforcement of prohibitions on distribution or supply of tobacco products free of charge or at a reduced charge, and
- amend the legislation to establish that any breach of the proposed amendments pertaining to sales to people younger than 18 is an offence liable to either fines or infringement notice.

We do not wish to appear in support of our submission.

Yours sincerely



Dr Peter Foley
Chair, NZMA

⁵ Peto R et al “Mortality from Smoking in Developed Countries 1950-2000”, Oxford UK, Oxford University Press; 2006

⁶ Ministry of Health, “The Burden of Disease and Injury in New Zealand”. Public Health Intelligence Occasional Bulletin. Wellington: Public Health Intelligence, 1997.

⁷ Marmot, M et al, “Social Determinants of Health”, 2nd edition (Oxford University Press 2006, Oxford); Barnett, R et al “Community inequality and smoking cessation in New Zealand, 1981–2006”, Social Science and Medicine, vol 68 2009; 876-884.

⁸ Above n 5