



NEW ZEALAND MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

10 May 2010

John Stribling,
Ministry of Health,
PO Box 5013,
Wellington

By email: john_stribling@moh.govt.nz

Dear John

PROPOSAL TO BAN TOBACCO RETAIL DISPLAYS IN NEW ZEALAND

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this proposal.

The NZMA has long been a supporter of proposed actions seeking to reduce the incidence of smoking in New Zealand. In January 2008 we wrote to the Ministry of Health in respect of its "Review of Tobacco Displays in New Zealand" and advised that we supported the call for a total ban on the retail display of tobacco products in New Zealand, which was made by the Cancer Society of New Zealand and ASH New Zealand in their joint submission. More recently we wrote to the Maori Affairs Select Committee setting out our concerns about the effect smoking is having on Maori.

Unfortunately the statistics do not look good. 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

In New Zealand tobacco smoking accounts for about 23% of all cancer deaths and 16% of deaths from all causes. When risk factors are ranked, smoking is responsible

¹ MOH, Background Rationale for the Smokefree Law FAQ, May 2005.

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.

for more premature death and disability than competing risks such as physical inactivity, high blood pressure, low fruit and vegetable intake, and high cholesterol.⁵

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.⁶

The NZMA believes that moving to ban retail displays is an important “next step” for New Zealand to take, for the following reasons:

Research has shown that children and adolescents who frequently visit stores with tobacco displays or self-reported exposure to tobacco displays are more likely to experiment and start smoking.⁷

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Tobacco retail displays trigger impulse purchase among ex-smokers and smokers who tried to quit.⁸

A study conducted by Professor Melanie Wakefield at the Cancer Council Victoria in Australia, found that almost 40% of smokers who tried to quit experienced an urge to purchase cigarettes as a result of seeing a tobacco retail display⁹.

In an in-depth study conducted by Massey University and Wellington School of Medicine, participants experienced an urge to smoke as they saw tobacco retail displays.¹⁰

Since conventional forms of tobacco advertising were banned, the tobacco industry has vastly increased their promotional budget and resources in retail settings and

⁵ Thornley, S et al Few smokers in South Auckland access subsidised nicotine replacement therapy, NZMJ 29 January 2010, Vol 123 No 1308.

⁶ Peto R, et al 2006. Mortality from Smoking in Developed Countries 1950 – 2000 (2nd edition, revised June 2006 www.deathsfromsmoking.net) Geneva: Switzerland: International Union Against Cancer (UICC)

⁷ Feighery, E.C., Henriksen, L., Wang, Y., Schleicher, N.C., Fortmann, S.P. 2006. An evaluation of four measures of adolescents’ exposure to cigarette marketing in stores. *Nicotine & Tobacco Research* 8(6):751- 759. Weiss, J.W., Cen, S., Schuster, V., Unger, J.B., Anderson Johnson, C., Mouttapa, M., et.al. 2006. Longitudinal effects of pro-tobacco and anti tobacco messages on adolescent smoking susceptibility. *Nicotine & Tobacco Research* 8(3):455-465.

⁸ Wakefield, M., Daniella, G., Lisa, H. 2007. The effect of retail cigarette pack displays on impulse purchase. *Addiction* 103 (2):322-328. Hoek, J., Gifford, H., Pirikahu, G., Edwards, R., Thomson, G. 2007. How do tobacco retail displays affect ex-smokers and lapsed quitters? Report for the Cancer Society of New Zealand and ASH New Zealand.

⁹ Wakefield, M., Daniella, G., Lisa, H. 2007. The effect of retail cigarette pack displays on impulse purchase. *Addiction* 103 (2):322-328.

¹⁰ Hoek, J., Gifford, H., Pirikahu, G., Edwards, R., Thomson, G. 2007. How do tobacco retail displays affect ex-smokers and lapsed quitters? Report for the Cancer Society of New Zealand and ASH New Zealand.

retail communications¹¹, notably in countries with comprehensive bans such as Australia and also New Zealand¹².

The industry has highly researched and integrated marketing strategies in retail environments to ensure in-store presence, attract attention and influence purchases by consumers¹³.

The industry pays incentives to retailers and sends representatives to advise retailers on the optimum placement of their products to increase sales^{14,15}.

We are pleased therefore that the Ministry is now looking seriously at a total ban. We wholeheartedly support the proposal.

Yours sincerely



Dr Peter Foley
Chair, NZMA

¹¹ Hammond, R. 2000. Tobacco advertising and promotion: the need for a coordinated global response. The WHO international conference on global tobacco control law: towards a WHO framework on tobacco control.

¹² Paynter, J., Freeman, B., Hughes, B. 2006. *Bringing down the Powerwall: A review of retail tobacco displays*. ASH New Zealand. Edwards, R., Thomson, G., Hoek, J., Gifford, H., Pirikahu, G. 2007. The attitudes and knowledge of retail sector staff to selling tobacco products. Report for the Cancer Society of New Zealand and ASH New Zealand.

Thomson, G., Edwards, R., Hudson, S., 2007. Evidence on the tobacco retail environment in New Zealand and overseas. Report for the Cancer Society of New Zealand and ASH New Zealand.

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¹⁴ Hammond, R. 2000. Tobacco advertising and promotion: the need for a coordinated global response. The WHO international conference on global tobacco control law: towards a WHO framework on tobacco control. 10 Paynter, J., Freeman, B., Hughes, B. 2006. *Bringing down the Powerwall: A review of retail tobacco displays*. ASH New Zealand.

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¹⁵ The NZMA acknowledges that the research for the above information on the impact of a tobacco retail ban comes from the ASH website and its fact sheets.