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## Media release

# Out of Sight - Out of Mind: The New Face of Tobacco Marketing

## Study shows retailers in breach of legislation

16 October 2006

A recent NZ survey shows that most stores and retail outlets sell tobacco in breach of current cigarette display regulations. This breach was worst in areas with a higher proportion of children.

The survey, carried out by Otago University's Wellington School of Medicine and Health Sciences, is the first of its kind. It covered almost 300 stores and retail outlets in the greater Wellington region

Dr George Thomson from the University of Otago says they were surprised to find that over 60% of outlets do not comply with the Smoke-free Environments Amendment Act.

"This study clearly indicates that the current cigarette display regulations are failing to protect children from tobacco marketing, and a complete ban on cigarette displays is needed," says Dr Thomson.

Dairies (76%) and convenience stores (82%) were the most likely to break at least one or more of the regulations for retail tobacco displays. The three most common violations were having tobacco products closer than one metre to children's products such as sweets (24% of all stores), failing to display a 'Smoking Kills' sign within two metres of the display (30%), and having tobacco displays which were visible from outside the shop (25%). Over half (55%) of dairies and convenience stores in areas with the highest proportion of children displayed cigarettes within a metre of children's products.

The Cancer Society is concerned that not enough is being done to stop this type of tobacco marketing.

"The current legislation around cigarette displays is woefully inadequate," says Belinda Hughes from the Cancer Society. "Cigarettes are not just another consumer item. They cause lethal cancers and are highly addictive. We've got to take a much more serious line on this issue."

Becky Freeman Director ASH NZ agrees. "Every marketer knows the importance of shelf space in dairies and supermarkets. The tobacco industry pays thousands of dollars to retain the best shelf space to attract and addict our kids. This has to stop. The current display regulations are not protecting our children. ASH believes the only way forward is to completely ban the retail display of tobacco."

There is evidence that some storeowners appear to get around the current regulations, through the use of multiple points of sale, sometimes using dummy tills, allowing larger displays of tobacco products.

The survey, which was sponsored by the Cancer Society, was carried out by medical students from the Wellington School of Medicine and Health Sciences.

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