



**Cancer Society of New Zealand
Te Rōpū Mate Pukupuku o Aotearoa**

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TOBACCO DISPLAYS MAKE IT HARDER TO QUIT – New survey findings

“Make no mistake, cigarette displays are determined, planned and strategic marketing tools. And our latest research proves this!”

Belinda Hughes, Tobacco Control Advisor for the Cancer Society of New Zealand, has empathy for those 46% of New Zealand smokers who have tried to quit in the last year. “We need to create a supportive environment to help them quit successfully. Getting cigarettes out of sight is an obvious way to do that.”

A recent survey commissioned by the Cancer Society shows that nearly half of New Zealand smokers *(45%) agree that cigarette displays at the checkout make it harder for smokers to quit – 34% saying the displays trigger impulse buying.

When asked whether they supported a complete ban on the display of cigarettes and tobacco products in all retail shops, 44% of smokers said they would, while a clear majority (68%) of all respondents (which is up 2% from late October 2006) said they would support such a ban.

“Having cigarettes sold from under the counter won’t stop all smokers from smoking, but it will help those who are trying to quit.

“Nearly half of New Zealand smokers tried to quit last year, but smoking is highly addictive and many smokers find it hard to stop. We need to do everything in our power to support smokers to successfully break the addiction. Getting cigarettes out of sight is a good first step.”

Ms Hughes is also concerned about the impact the retail displays have on children. “The prominent displays of tobacco products as ‘normal’ consumer items can distort young peoples’ perceptions of the prevalence (and therein social acceptability) of smoking.

“In New Zealand the mean age of smoking initiation is 14.6 years, so whilst tobacco companies often argue that smoking ‘is an adult choice’ it is young people who are virtually their only source of new customers. They invest heavily in researching and targeting young people with marketing.”

Later this month Ms Hughes will be presenting the Cancer Society's case for banning the display of tobacco products in shops to the Health Select Committee. The Committee is reviewing the issue after a 20,000 strong petition coordinated by the Cancer Society was presented to Parliament in July.

- Ends -

Media enquiries: For questions or to set up an interview with Belinda Hughes, please contact Lynne St.Clair-Chapman, National Communications Manager for the Cancer Society of New Zealand, on Tel: (04) 494 7195 / Mob: 027 4444 150, or email Lynne@cancer.org.nz.

* Results in this release are based upon questions asked in a UMR Research nation-wide omnibus survey of a nationally representative sample of New Zealanders 18 years of age and over. Fieldwork was conducted from the 8th to 13th June 2007 at UMR Research's national interview facility in Auckland. The margin of error for sample size of 750 for a 50% figure at the '95% confidence level' is $\pm 3.6\%$.