



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

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Tobacco displays on the way out

As international momentum builds, the Cancer Society is calling on all political parties to put people ahead of corporate interests and get tobacco out of sight in retail outlets.

“Tobacco displays are on their way out in an increasing number of countries and New Zealand is falling behind,” said the Cancer Society’s Tobacco Control Adviser Belinda Hughes.

“In addition to bans on tobacco displays in Iceland and Thailand we are seeing them introduced in a growing number of Provinces in Canada and beginning to be introduced in Australian states led by Tasmania. The UK government is also looking into getting tobacco out of sight.”

The Australian state of Tasmania is the latest jurisdiction to announce that it is phasing out retail displays of tobacco products. It will be the first Australian state to ban the display of tobacco products but others are racing to catch up.

The Australian Capital Territory has introduced legislation to ban tobacco displays and other states are under to pressure to follow suit.

In Canada the Province of British Columbia is the most recent Province to introduce a ban on tobacco displays (March 2008) since Saskatchewan banned tobacco displays in 2002.

Complete bans on the retail display of tobacco products are in place in the Canadian Provinces of Nunavut (2004), Prince Edward Island (2006), Nova Scotia (2007), Ontario

(2008) and Québec (2008). Canada is now considering national legislation regulating tobacco displays.

This month the UK government announced that it is launching a consultation on the future of tobacco displays in May this year following on from their successful introduction of smoke-free environments legislation.

The Cancer Society of New Zealand says that New Zealand children need protection from the influence of tobacco displays.

“Anything less than a total ban on tobacco displays will enable tobacco companies to continue to market lethal and addictive products to children,” said Ms Hughes.

“A ban on retail tobacco displays will stop children being confronted with promotional tobacco imagery occupying the most prominent display space in retail outlets. By doing so it will help prevent the children of this generation becoming the smokers of tomorrow.”

The Cancer Society is an independent organisation which represents people with Cancer, and their families, and is not government funded.

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BACKGROUND

1. Tobacco kills people who have been addicted as children

- Tobacco is not a normal consumer product – cigarettes are the only product that kills when used as the manufacturer intends. Half of long-term smokers die as a result of smoking and 25% of cancer deaths are caused by smoking.
- The vast majority of smokers began smoking as children.

- Most smokers want to quit smoking. MoH data shows that 45% of current NZ smokers made an active quit attempt in the last 12 months. However the addictiveness of nicotine makes quitting difficult for many people.
- The dangerous nature of tobacco smoking justifies restrictions on its distribution and sale as well as the elimination of its advertising and promotion.

2. Cigarette displays are an anomaly

- NZ banned most types of tobacco advertising in 1990. Retail displays are one of the last remaining forms of advertising still explicitly allowed. It is an anomaly. All the arguments which hold true for banning tobacco advertising on billboards and TV hold true for retail displays.

3. Cigarette displays are effective marketing devices

- With restrictions on other types of advertising and promotion, cigarette displays have become an essential part of the tobacco industry's marketing strategy. Cigarette displays are considered the tobacco industry's most "important sphere of influence" in their marketing.
- Banning cigarette displays doesn't stop people from buying cigarettes; it stops tobacco companies from marketing them.

4. Cigarette Displays influence children:

- Tobacco displays are hypocritical. On the one hand we tell kids not to smoke, and yet we allow tobacco to be put in their way in convenience stores and supermarkets around the country.
- Cigarette displays make kids more familiar with cigarettes and increase the perception that cigarettes are more popular and socially acceptable than they really are.

- Research shows that young people who overestimate smoking rates are more likely to become smokers themselves. The vast majority of new smokers are children.

5. Cigarette displays undermine and discourage quit attempts:

- Australian research has found that a third of smokers thought the removal of cigarette displays from stores would make it easier for them to quit.¹ This reflects an opinion poll in New Zealand (commissioned by the Cancer Society) which showed that 45% of smokers thought tobacco displays made it harder for smokers to quit.

6. Strong public support for a ban on tobacco displays:

- New Zealanders intuitively understand and support calls to ban tobacco displays. There was strong public support for a ban on tobacco displays even before any publicity of the issue and this support is growing (68% in Sept 07).

7. NZ is being left behind:

There is growing international momentum to ban tobacco displays. Key examples include the following:

- **Iceland:** In 2001, Iceland became the first jurisdiction in the world to implement a law banning all retail displays of tobacco.
- **Canada:** The Canadian province of Saskatchewan banned tobacco displays in outlets that minors have access to in 2002. Several other Provinces followed suit and have complete bans on the retail display of tobacco products including Nunavut (2004), Prince Edward Island (2006), Nova Scotia (2007), Ontario (2008) and Québec (2008). Canada is now considering national legislation regulating tobacco displays.
- **Thailand:** Thailand has banned the retail display of tobacco products since 2005.

¹ Wakefield M, Germain D, Henriksen L.. 'The effect of retail cigarette pack displays on impulse purchase', Centre for Behavioural Research in Cancer, The Cancer Council Victoria, Australia. Addiction 2007 Nov 27.

- **Australia:** Tasmania has passed a law that will ban displays in 2011. The Health Minister of the Australian Capital Territory (Canberra and surrounding area) introduced a bill in the Legislative Assembly which would require retailers to keep cigarette products below the counter or in drawers where they cannot be seen.