



Cancer Society New Zealand
Te Kāhui Matepukupuku o Aotearoa

National Office
Level 2, Red Cross House
69 Molesworth Street, Thorndon
PO Box 12700
Wellington 6011

Telephone: 64 4 494-7270
Facsimile: 64 4 494-7271

Websites: www.cancernz.org.nz
www.daffodilday.org.nz
www.relayforlife.org.nz
Email: admin@cancer.org.nz

MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday 12 January 2010

Tax will help people quit smoking

The Cancer Society welcomes recent announcements by the Hon Tariana Turia, Associate Minister of Health, that an increase in tobacco tax is on the government's agenda.

"Tobacco smoking is one of the main causes of cancer mortality in New Zealand and despite widespread understanding linking cancer and smoking, around 20% of New Zealand people continue to smoke," said the society's Tobacco Control Advisor, Navid Foroutan

"The rate of smoking is higher among more vulnerable populations and these are exactly the people who are most sensitive to any rise in price."

National and international evidence shows that raising the excise tax on tobacco is a most effective measure and proven to reduce smoking consumption.

"Smoking cessation is already a high priority for the government, but without introducing substantial tax increases, it is unlikely smoking cessation efforts will be very successful," commented Chief Executive, Dalton Kelly. "We believe the tax increases will be most effective if they are substantial and regular, and roll your own tobacco should be taxed at a higher rate to equalise its cost at the counter."

The Cancer Society advocates that a fixed proportion of any tax increase, which will increase the government's revenue from tobacco sales (currently around 1 billion dollars), should be allocated to health promotion and smoking prevention as well as cessation services and campaigns. Tax increases are supported by New Zealanders, including smokers, especially if some of the funds are directed towards helping smokers quit.

Media enquiries:

Lynne St.Clair-Chapman

National Communications Manager

Tel 04 494 7195 Mob 027 444 4150