

## Tobacco Control

### Introduction

The following is a position statement on tobacco control prepared by Population Health for Waikato District Health Board (Waikato DHB).

### The Waikato District Health Board's position

The Waikato DHB supports a multi sector approach to reduce tobacco consumption levels and the prevalence of smoking in New Zealand across all age groups, ethnicities and genders. This requires providing a supportive environment for non-smokers, and strategies that encourage smokers to quit and remain smokefree. Effective tobacco control is comprehensive and includes healthy public policy development, strengthening community action and developing personal skills to support behaviour change.

The Waikato DHB will adhere to the principles of the smokefree hospital project to help reach the new 2010, 2011 and 2012 targets for hospital inpatients that are offered cessation.

The Waikato DHB will provide their staff with free nicotine replacement therapy as to help them quit smoking. Also education on smoking cessation is available to all staff on request.

The Waikato DHB believes that Māori specific interventions should be prioritised, thus helping to reduce the inequalities in smoking rates<sup>i</sup>. Also priority should be given to interventions that reduce the rates of smoking for people living in high deprivation<sup>i</sup>.

The Waikato DHB supports measures that protect non smokers from second hand smoke – especially vulnerable population groups (e.g. children and pregnant women)<sup>i</sup>.

### Background

The World Health Organisation has estimated that tobacco use causes approximately five million deaths per year worldwide. This figure is expected to double by 2025<sup>ii</sup>.

Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death in New Zealand with 4300 - 4700 people dying each year due to smoking related illness. In addition to this there is an estimated 400 people who die from second hand smoke, suggesting that a total of 5000 people die each year due to smoking<sup>iii</sup>.

### Waikato region policy: tobacco control

The identified Waikato DHB region indicators that are aligned with the national health target to provide better help to people who smoke, to enable them to quit, is that 80 percent of hospitalised smokers are provided with advice and helped to quit by 2010, 90 percent by July 2011 and 95 percent by July 2012.

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## Tobacco use health inequalities

Significant health inequalities exist relative to tobacco use with 75 percent of tobacco consumed by people on low income<sup>i</sup>. Smoking rates among Māori and Pacific people are greater than the overall population. The Māori smoking rate is 46 percent and the rate of Pacific island people smoking is 36 percent, compared to an overall smoking rate of 23 percent of the entire New Zealand population<sup>iv</sup>.

The aukati kai paipa programme targets Māori smokers and is the main cessation programme that is promoted in the Waikato region. This programme provides one to one counselling to help people quit smoking<sup>v</sup>.

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<sup>i</sup> Public Health Association. (2003). Public Health Association of New Zealand: Policy on Tobacco. Retrieved June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2009, from the 'Public Health Association of New Zealand'

<sup>ii</sup> Action on Smoking and Health. (2006). Smoking. Retrieved June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2009, from 'Action on Smoking and Health' website: [http://www.ash.org.nz/index.php?page\\_id=15&top\\_parent\\_id=15&curr\\_level=0](http://www.ash.org.nz/index.php?page_id=15&top_parent_id=15&curr_level=0)

<sup>iii</sup> Smokefree. (2009). Face the Facts – Facts. Retrieved June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2009, from the 'Face the Facts' website: <http://www.facethefacts.org.nz/facts>

<sup>iv</sup> Ministry of Health. (2007). New Zealand Smoking Cessation Guidelines. Wellington: Ministry of Health.

<sup>v</sup> Health Sponsorship Council. (n.d.). Smokefree - Frequently Asked Questions. Retrieved June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2009, from the 'Smokefree' website: <http://smokefree.co.nz/faq.html>

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