

Position Statement



Tobacco-Free Generation in Tasmania

Background

- Tobacco smoking remains the largest cause of preventable death and disease in Australia.^{1,2}
- Up to two-thirds of deaths in current smokers can be attributed to smoking.³
- Smoking is a risk factor for 16 cancer types: lung, oral cavity, pharynx, oesophagus, stomach, bowel, liver, pancreas, nasal cavity and paranasal sinuses, larynx, uterine cervix, ovary, urinary bladder, kidney, ureter and bone marrow (myeloid leukaemia).⁴
- In 2013-14, over 400 Tasmanian deaths were attributable to smoking. In this same period, the tangible cost of smoking to the Tasmanian society was estimated at \$465 million.⁵
- In Tasmania, more than 85% of daily smokers start by age 18, and virtually all (95%) by age 21.⁶
- Smoking rates are at an all-time low in Tasmania, thanks to a wide range of effective public health measures such as regular increases to the price of tobacco, hard-hitting social marketing campaigns, smoke-free environments, bans on tobacco advertising and smoking cessation programs such as the Tasmanian Quitline.
- Tasmania has the second highest smoking rate in the country (17.9% of Tasmanian adults smoke daily, compared to 14.5% nationally).⁷

Tobacco-Free Generation

- The Tobacco-Free Generation (TFG) proposal advocates legislation precluding the sale of tobacco to individuals born after a certain year. The TFG emphasis is on the welfare of future generations and provides an opportunity for the eradication of tobacco supply.⁸
- The Honourable Ivan Dean, MLC introduced a private members' Bill in the Legislative Council to implement the TFG proposal. This proposal advocates for legislation precluding the sale of tobacco to individuals born after the year 2000, to protect them from the harmful effects of tobacco.
- Further information on the *Public Health Amendment (Tobacco-Free Generation) Bill 2014* is available at the Parliament of Tasmania website ([available here](#)).

Key Messages and Recommendations

- Cancer Council Tasmania supports the Tasmanian Government's goal to make Tasmania the healthiest population in Australia by 2025 and continued investment in the evidence-based strategies set out in the *Tasmanian Tobacco Action Plan 2011 – 2015*.
- CCT supports the TFG proposal and other approaches that may accelerate further reductions in smoking rates in our community. Introduction of such approaches need to coincide with public education and be undertaken as only part of a comprehensive tobacco control strategy which utilises proven measures to reduce smoking rates including continued and sustained high levels of investment in social marketing campaigns (to achieve a minimum average of 700 TARPs per month), regular increases to the cost of tobacco via rises in tobacco excise, expansion of smoke-free areas and the provision of smoking cessation programs such as the Tasmanian Quitline.
- In Tasmania, there is strong public support for the TFG proposal, even among people who smoke.⁶

2014 Tasmanian Smoking and Health Survey Findings

Cancer Council Tasmania coordinated the 2014 Tasmanian Smoking and Health Survey. The comprehensive survey is undertaken with human research ethics approval and collects information on attitudes, beliefs and behaviours of people who smoke and non-smokers across a range of smoking and tobacco control related issues. The survey was supported by Primary Health Tasmania under the Primary Health Networks Program – an Australian Government Initiative.

Table: Percentage of Tasmanian adults who support the Tobacco-Free Generation proposal in 2014, by smoking status.

	% Support
All	75
<i>Smoking status</i>	
Current smoker	72
Former smoker	75
Never smoker	76

References

- ¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2013). Australian Health Survey: First Results 2011-12.
- ² Begg, S., Vos, T., Barker, B., Stevenson, C., Stanley, L., & Lopez, A. (2007). The burden of disease and injury in Australia 2003. Canberra: AIHW.
- ³ Banks, E., Joshy, G., Weber, M. F., Liu, B., *et al* (2015). Tobacco smoking and all-cause mortality in a large Australian cohort study: findings from a mature epidemic with current low smoking prevalence. *BMC Medicine*, 13, 38-48.
- ⁴ International Agency for Research on Cancer (2012). IARC monographs on the evaluation of carcinogenic risks to humans, volume 100 (E). A review of human carcinogens: Personal habits and indoor combustions. Lyon, France: IARC.
- ⁵ Peter Bennett Consulting (2015). An analysis of the economic and social costs of smoking in Tasmania 2013-14. Unpublished report, Hobart: Cancer Council Tasmania.
- ⁶ Trainer, E., Smith, A. (2015). The Tasmanian smoking survey: findings from the 2014 population survey. Quit Tasmania, Cancer Council Tasmania, Hobart.
- ⁷ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2015). National Health Survey, First Results, 2014-15 (cat. no. 4364.0.55.001).
- ⁸ Berrick, A. J. (2013). The tobacco-free generation proposal. *Tobacco Control*, 22, i22-i26.