

Media Release

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Celebrating World No Tobacco Day 2012 with a decrease in smoking rates

Smoking rates in NSW have dropped to an all time record low, new figures show.

The latest NSW Adult Health Survey confirms that the percentage of adults who currently smoke has dropped to 14.8 per cent– down from 15.8 per cent in 2010.

In South Eastern Sydney Local Health District the current rate of smoking amongst adults is 13.4 per cent, a considerable reduction from the 25 per cent recorded in 1997.

“It is so encouraging to see a continued reduction in the number of people smoking and this result is particularly good news on World No Tobacco Day,” said Julie Dixon, Director, Population Health and Planning, South Eastern Sydney Local Health District.

Smoking-related illness places a significant burden on the health system and accounts for around 5,200 deaths and 44,000 hospitalisations – costing the NSW economy around \$8 billion each year.

The NSW Tobacco Strategy 2012-2017 outlines this Government’s commitment to reducing the harm which tobacco causes and includes some of the most progressive tobacco reforms in Australia.

“We are extending the number of smoke-free public places to include outdoor areas and have proposed reforms to ban smoking within 10 metres from children’s play equipment in public playgrounds and four metres of a pedestrian access point to public buildings,” the Minister for Health, Jillian Skinner said.

“Under the reforms smoke-free areas will also be introduced in spectator areas at all major sporting facilities, public sports grounds, community swimming pools, public transport stops and stations.”

Mrs Skinner said that smoke-free areas will extend to commercial outdoor dining areas from 2015.

“Smoking rates remain disproportionately higher in regional and remote areas of NSW among socio-economic disadvantaged communities and in Aboriginal communities, particularly amongst pregnant Aboriginal women.

“We will address higher smoking rates in these population groups through a range of targeted programs which will support state-based tobacco reforms,” Mrs Skinner said.

The 2011 NSW Adult Health Survey can be viewed at: <http://www.healthstats.nsw.gov.au/>

The NSW Tobacco Strategy 2012-2017 is available at: http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/pubs/2012/nsw_tobacco_strategy_2012.html

If you would like to quit smoking call the Quitline on 13QUIT (13 78 48) for professional support.

South Eastern Sydney Local Health District
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