

New ACT tobacco laws logical step forward

ACT Smoking (Prohibition in Enclosed Public Places) Amendment Bill 2009

The new ACT tobacco laws are an important next step in preventing harm associated with smoking according to the Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA). The PHAA is pleased with the passage of the ACT Smoking (Prohibition in Enclosed Public Places) Amendment Bill 2009.

The CEO of the PHAA, Michael Moore stated that “The Health Minister Katy Gallagher and the ACT government deserve congratulations as do the Greens and Liberals. All of the Members of the Assembly supported this sensible legislation. This is an important measure that will not only assist in reducing levels of smoking in the community but will also reduce exposure and harm to non-smokers.”

“It is important to note that the US Surgeon General has identified that there is no safe level of exposure to tobacco. Therefore, every time there is a reduction in smoking there is also a commensurate improvement in health.

“A key element of all tobacco strategies is the aim of a constant decline in smoking. This step in the ACT of preventing smoking in restaurants, cafés and coffee shops will add pressure to smokers to reconsider the damage they are doing to themselves and to those around them”.

The ACT has lower rates of smoking than the national average with 14.7% of people smoking compared to 16.6% nationally. Smoking rates have come down from post WWII rates of around 80% to these levels but still remain the most significant cause of preventable ill-health for Australians. “It is important for governments to maintain constant pressure to achieve this decline and that is what has happened with the passage of this legislation in the ACT,” Mr Moore added.

For further information/comment:

Michael Moore, CEO, Public Health Association of Australia

0417 249 731