

SMOKING TO PLUMMET – TAX INCREASE WILL BRING MASSIVE HEALTH BENEFITS

The Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA) has predicted that smoking will fall dramatically as a result of today's announcements by the Australian Government.

PHAA President Professor Mike Daube said, "After the massive tobacco tax increase and plain packaging decisions announced today, smoking in Australia will plummet in both adults and children. We can safely predict that adult smoking will fall from the present 16% to 10% or below within a decade – and that after this it will go into freefall."

"This is outstanding news for tobacco control and for Australia's health. The Government's actions will over time prevent literally hundreds of thousands of premature deaths from cancer, heart disease and many other conditions."

"We haven't had a proper tobacco tax increase for over a decade, and Australia is one of the lowest tobacco taxing countries in the OECD, so the 25% increase announced today is especially welcome."

"The Government should be congratulated for implementing all the key recommendations of the Preventative Health Taskforce on smoking. We now have a massive tax increase, increased funding for mass media, plain packaging and a host of other national and state initiatives. Australia has become the world leader in tobacco control."

"Cigarettes will now be packaged like poisons, and priced to deter use. These are crucial measures in preventing smoking among children as well as adults."

"The tobacco industry's protests are the best possible evidence that these measures will have an impact – but tobacco companies denied the evidence on tobacco and health for decades, so there is no reason to believe anything they might say about tobacco control."

"This historic breakthrough for public health will be supported by all those with a genuine concern for public health. The Government deserves praise for taking on powerful commercial interests and implementing the recommendations of the Preventative Health Taskforce. It is exciting to see Australia once again leading the world in tobacco control."

ENDS

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