

## AUSTRALIAN CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION ALLIANCE



### MEDIA RELEASE

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### **Health groups welcome new National Tobacco Strategy to prevent chronic disease in Australia**

The Australian Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance (ACDPA) has welcomed a new National Tobacco Strategy and measures to reduce tobacco use and vaping announced today by the Federal Minister for Health and Aged Care, Mark Butler, ahead of the 2023-24 Federal Budget.

Australia's new National Tobacco Strategy 2023-2030 sets out a framework to further reduce the health, economic, environmental, and social harms from tobacco and related products, in pursuit of a goal to reduce smoking prevalence to less than 5% by 2030.

The ACDPA recognises the Strategy and measures as signals of the Federal Government's commitment to improving and saving Australian lives by preventing chronic conditions, where possible, before they start, and minimising their impact on lives and the health system.

Smoking continues to deprive Australians of millions of healthy years of life, contributing to entirely preventable tobacco-related illness including cancers, stroke, diabetes and cardiovascular, kidney and lung diseases. As many as two thirds of people who smoke will die from smoking related illness.

While smoking prevalence in Australia has halved since the late 1970s - thanks to world-leading measures such as plain packaging - there is still much that can be done to eliminate tobacco related harm, and to ensure progress gained is not lost.

As tobacco smoking has decreased, newer products containing nicotine and other harmful chemicals have entered the Australian market particularly in the form of vapes and e-cigarettes, often illegally and falling into the hands of children and teenagers, risking a new generation of smokers through addiction to nicotine, with those who vape three times more likely to take up tobacco smoking.

New measures announced today include:

- A 5% increase in tobacco excise per year for the next three years, and alignment of tax treatment across tobacco products, projected to raise more than \$3 Billion in revenue, including \$290 million in GST to help fund improvements in the health system.
- Greater focus on prescription pathway for nicotine containing e-cigarettes, stronger border control measures to stop non-prescription vapes entering the market, and measures to reduce the appeal of vapes and e-cigarettes.
- New investments in education, cessation and disease detection including initiatives to discourage uptake of vaping and smoking particularly among young people, further support those who want to quit, and a new lung cancer screening programme.

ACDPA commends the Federal, State and Territory governments who have aligned on the measures and agreed to work together to invest in implementing the measures.

"With this new Tobacco Strategy Minister Butler has further asserted the Government's commitment to helping all Australians live long, healthy lives with less chronic disease," said Chris Forbes, ACDPA Chair and Kidney Health Australia CEO.

"More people experiencing a higher quality of life, enjoying time with family and engaging in communities will come from fewer people exposed to harmful tobacco smoke and fewer people with tobacco related illness. Australians are increasingly recognising the value of health, and the

new National Tobacco Strategy and measures such as those announced today will help minimise daily treatment and care costs arising from the addictive and harmful products of the tobacco industry.” said Mr Forbes.

The new National Tobacco Strategy augments existing measures which have helped millions of Australians to avoid the harms of smoking and inspired other governments to adopt similarly lifesaving tobacco control policies.

“Australia’s National Preventive Health Strategy (2021-2030) included a target for Australians to enjoy an additional two years of life lived in full health by 2030 through prevention of chronic disease, including reducing daily smoking prevalence to less than 10% by 2025 and 5% or less for adults by 2030.” said Lucy Westerman, ACDPA Executive Officer.

Later in May governments will convene in Geneva, Switzerland for the 76<sup>th</sup> World Health Assembly of the World Health Organization (WHO) where they will discuss an updated menu of actions for countries to consider to reduce non-communicable, or chronic diseases, as the world stares down global targets to reduce preventable death and disability from such diseases.

The WHO’s updated recommendations to reduce tobacco use complement the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control to which Australia is a signatory, and recommendations to reduce tobacco-related NCDs include combining plain packaging and health warnings and greater specificity on what’s deemed ‘effective’ tobacco cessation pharmacotherapy.

“25 years of tobacco control measures in Australia has shown the importance of taking a long-term view of investing in actions that reduce exposure to harmful products and pollutants/contaminants, which often take time to take effect, but realise enormous improvements to lives” said Ms Westerman.

“Comprehensively implementing this new National Tobacco Strategy throughout Australia will make a significant dent in achieving that target, improving the lives of millions of Australians and positioning Australia as at the forefront protecting people from tobacco harm.” concluded Ms Westerman.

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- [National Tobacco Strategy 2023-2030 \(pdf\)](#)
- Hon Mark Butler MP Announcement: [Taking action on smoking and vaping | Health Portfolio Ministers and Aged Care](#)

***About the Australian Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance (ACDPA)***

*The Australian Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance (ACDPA) brings together Cancer Council Australia, Diabetes Australia, Heart Foundation, Kidney Health Australia, Stroke Foundation, and Lung Foundation Australia. Together we advocate for the long-term health and wellbeing of Australians by providing a powerful voice for those living with, or at risk of, chronic disease. [www.acdpa.org.au](http://www.acdpa.org.au)*