

Jane Cartwright  
c/o PO Box 13-450  
Christchurch 8141



12 November 2017

Hon Dr David Clark  
Minister of Health  
Beehive  
Parliament Buildings  
Wellington

Dear Minister,

Congratulations on your appointment as Minister of Health.

As you will know, smoking has an extremely high cost in Aotearoa New Zealand. Every day on average, 13 New Zealanders die from smoking-related diseases. This equates to one in every six deaths. In our priority groups such as Māori and Pacific the impact of smoking is disproportionately felt.

The good news is that as Minister of Health you have the ability to put in place a series of actions to stop New Zealanders dying from smoking.

New Zealand has a world-leading goal, Smokefree Aotearoa 2025, which aims to reduce the prevalence of daily smoked tobacco use to less than 5%, and as close as possible to 0%, by December 2025. Unfortunately, modelling estimates suggest that the goal will not be achieved unless new policies are developed and implemented.

In the absence of a government strategy, more than 30 experts from New Zealand and overseas, together with around 100 health and community stakeholders, have provided input for an evidence-based, comprehensive plan that sets out the actions needed to reach the Smokefree Aotearoa 2025 goal. These actions include:

- Dramatically reduce the number of retail outlets that sell tobacco.
- Gradually increase the minimum purchase age over time.
- Increase tobacco tax by 20 per cent annually for three years.
- Introduce a new minimum retail price for tobacco products.
- Introduce standardised packaging and enhanced pictorial health warnings.
- Extend smokefree environment legislation to include specific outdoor areas and vehicles carrying children.
- Better targeting of smoking cessation advice and support to reach priority groups, particularly Māori and Pacific smokers.

All the actions required to achieve the Smokefree Aotearoa 2025 goal can be found in the attached 'Achieving Smokefree Aotearoa by 2025 Plan' (ASAP). The Plan is also available here: <https://aspire2025.org.nz/hot-topics/smokefree-action-plan/>

While achieving the Smokefree Aotearoa 2025 goal will require courageous leadership, it is important to note that it is supported by the majority of New Zealanders. According to a study published in the New Zealand Journal of Medicine (May 2013), 79% of people surveyed supported the 2025 smokefree goal of reducing smoking prevalence to 5% or less, and more than two-thirds agreed they wanted to live in a country where hardly anyone smokes.

We look forward to working with you to put in place the actions required to eliminate tobacco-caused illness and death in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Yours faithfully,



**Jane Cartwright    Chair Smokefree Canterbury**



**Carly McDowell    Chair Smokefree Mid Canterbury**



**Anne Hines    Chair West Coast Tobacco Free Coalition**