

## Policy Statement 2.2.4 – Community Oral Health Promotion: Tobacco

### Position Summary

Governments should legislate to increase taxation on tobacco products, and ban all tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship. Governments should appropriately fund nicotine replacement therapies and other programs to stop smoking. Dental Practitioners should incorporate tobacco cessation guidance into patient care.

### 1. Background

- 1.1. In Australia cigarette smoking is the most common mode of tobacco use. Other forms include roll-your-own tobacco, cigars, water pipe tobacco, and pipe tobacco.
- 1.2. Tobacco use significantly reduces the general health of an individual as it is the single most preventable cause of disease and premature death. There is no safe level of smoking and second-hand smoke has significant adverse health effects.
- 1.3. Smoking amongst pregnant women has negative impacts on foetal development.
- 1.4. Tobacco use is a major cause of cancer of the mouth and throat and other systemic diseases.
- 1.5. Tobacco use is a significant risk factor in the development and progression of gum disease [periodontal disease].
- 1.6. Tobacco use contributes to tooth loss and failure of dental implants.
- 1.7. Tobacco use may contribute to dry mouth, tooth wear, staining of teeth and fillings, and bad breath.
- 1.8. Tobacco use delays oral wound healing.
- 1.9. Quitting tobacco use will contribute to improved oral and general health.
- 1.10. There is sound research supporting nicotine replacement therapies.
- 1.11. Dental Practitioners are in a position to identify increased health risks from tobacco use and provide guidance to help their patients quit smoking.
- 1.12. Past and current tobacco use are an important part of a dental patient's medical history.

### Definitions

- 1.13. DENTAL PRACTITIONER is a person registered by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency via the Board to provide dental care.

### 2. Position

- 2.1. No one should use tobacco products and governments should work towards creating a 'Tobacco Free Generation'.
- 2.2. Dental Practitioners should incorporate tobacco cessation guidance into patient care including external referral to appropriate agencies.

- 2.3. Public awareness campaigns on the health issues related to tobacco use should be encouraged and maintained.
- 2.4. Funding Agencies should support the role of dentists in assisting patients to stop using tobacco products.
- 2.5. While the sale of tobacco products remains legal, governments should increase taxation on their sale, continue to restrict smoking in public areas and ban all tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship.
- 2.6. Governments should ensure appropriate funding and access to nicotine replacement therapies and other quit smoking programs.
- 2.7. Governments should consider the evidence base and cost-effectiveness for preventive strategies when making decisions about public funding.
- 2.8. Health professionals should not smoke in public when they are identifiable in their occupational role.

#### **Policy Statement 2.2.4**

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