

## TOBACCO POSITION STATEMENT

The Heart Foundation is committed to meeting the goal of a smoke free New Zealand by 2025. Meeting this goal will require the commitment and collaboration of the Heart Foundation with the government, other tobacco control services and the wider health sector. A coordinated and planned approach, together with clear, defined targets is required if we are to meet this necessary goal and protect New Zealand from the devastating impact of tobacco upon our health and wellbeing.

In New Zealand, smoking is responsible for approximately 5000 deaths a year, 500 of which are caused by second-hand smoke. Tobacco-related cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes, respiratory illness and other chronic diseases will eventually kill half of all smokers. Tobacco is also a major contributor to the life expectancy gap between Maori and non-Maori, Pacific and non-Pacific populations within New Zealand.

In order to protect the health and wellbeing of our people, the Foundation supports measures which will:

1. Protect children and youth from exposure to tobacco products and the marketing of tobacco products.
2. Empower current smokers to quit using culturally-appropriate support services and products.
3. Progressively de normalise the act of smoking through reducing the visibility of tobacco within New Zealand society.

The rates of daily smoking need to be monitored through established surveys and monitoring such as the Tobacco Use Survey, Continuous Tobacco Monitor, Action on Smoking and Health Year 10 Smoking Survey and tobacco industry reports and data.

There are currently significant differences in smoking rates for Maori and Pacific and the general population in New Zealand which contribute to an unacceptable disparity in life expectancy. . The Heart Foundation considers it to be the right of all people in New Zealand to live healthier, smoke free lives and therefore advocate for more comprehensive and appropriate cessation and smoke free services for these vulnerable groups.

**Goal:**

That the New Zealand government and the health sector work together to ensure New Zealand become a smoke free nation (<5% of the total population are daily smokers) by 2025.

**Objectives:****The Heart Foundation will be focusing on the following immediate objectives:**

1. Policy commitment to the implementation of Tupeka Kore – tobacco free New Zealand by 2025 (or earlier).
2. Policy commitment to plain packaging of all tobacco products sold within New Zealand to be enforced by 2013 at the latest.
3. Increased smoking cessation support and options for smokers in New Zealand. Most importantly increased capacity and targeting to support high-risk communities such as pregnant women, Maori, Pacific and people of low socio-economic status.