

# Two thirds of kiwis want a smokefree New Zealand by 2020

Smokefree Coalition media release, 18 May 2010

The Smokefree Coalition will present research to the Māori Affairs Select Committee in Wellington tomorrow showing that 64 percent of New Zealanders completely support an end to tobacco sales by 2020.

The new findings from UMR back up the Coalition's proposal for a comprehensive set of policies to end the commercial sale of tobacco by 2020.

Coalition Director Dr Prudence Stone and Chairperson Professor Robert Beaglehole will outline to the Select Committee a Vision for a tobacco free New Zealand and the steps required to reach this within a decade.

"The recent tax increases on tobacco products are an important first step in achieving this Vision. The next steps include further tax increases, banning retail displays, switching to plain packaging and making youth environments smokefree.

"We also need to restrict the supply of tobacco products and several options for achieving that merit investigation," Professor Beaglehole said.

"If public support is what our leaders need in order to act, then these survey results show they have it. The public shares our Vision to free New Zealand from tobacco's deadly grip within a generation."

Dr Stone said the Vision is about reducing demand, not banning smoking.

"The last thing the Coalition wants is the criminalisation of smokers. It's all about creating an environment that protects vulnerable young people and supports smokers to quit successfully."

## Notes to editors

- UMR's Nationwide Omnibus is a telephone survey of a representative sample of New Zealanders 18 years of age and over.
- The survey was commissioned by Smokefree Coalition member Action on Smoking and Health (ASH) New Zealand and took place mid April 2010.
- The Select Committee will be urged to accept the Coalition's *Achieving the Vision* strategy document. The Vision is a roadmap towards dramatically reducing the demand for tobacco in the New Zealand marketplace and regulating its supply before 2020. A copy of the Vision can be found at [www.sfc.org.nz/thevision.php](http://www.sfc.org.nz/thevision.php).
- The Smokefree Coalition is a nationwide network of 34 health organisations. Members include the New Zealand Medical Association, The Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners, the Cancer Society of New Zealand, the National Heart Foundation and the Royal Australasian College of Physicians.

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