

Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Bill 2023

Submission No: 29

Submitted by: The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) Queensland Faculty

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Attachments:

Submitter Comments:



RACGP
Royal Australian College
of General Practitioners

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31 March 2023

Committee Secretary
Health and Environment Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane QLD 4000
via email: HEC@parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Committee Secretary,

RE: Response to Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendments Bill 2023

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) Queensland Faculty thanks Queensland Parliament Health and Environment Committee (HEC) for the opportunity to provide input on the *Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendments Bill 2023* (the Bill).

The RACGP is Australia's largest professional general practice organisation, representing over 40,000 members working in or toward a specialty career in general practice, including 4-in-5 rural general practitioners (GPs) who are members of the RACGP. The RACGP set the standards for general practice, facilitate lifelong learning for GPs, connect the general practice community, and advocate for better health and wellbeing for all Australians.

GPs are the backbone of Australian healthcare with almost nine in ten Australians visiting a GP each year.ⁱ The RACGP produces evidence-based clinical guidelines and resources relevant to all healthcare professionals who provide support for people wishing to quit smoking.

The potential legislative reforms outlined by the HEC have been carefully reviewed by the RACGP. We support the measures outlined in the proposed Bill, acknowledging that implementation of a licensing scheme for sellers, strong deterrents for non-compliance, limits on advertising, display and promotion of smoking products, and increasing smoke-free public places are reasonable means to limit the supply and trade in illicit tobacco products, and to protect families and children from exposure.

In particular we support the inclusion of Section 9B, which provides an exemption to permit registered pharmacies dispensing smoking products prescribed by a medical practitioner. This exemption will facilitate smoking cessation strategies utilised by General Practitioners, including the prescribing of nicotine replacement therapies (NRT). Support and advice from one's GP can positively affect the attitudes, knowledge, intentions, and quitting behaviours of adolescents, thereby promoting both prevention and cessation.ⁱⁱ



In terms of the efficacy and cost-effectiveness of smoking cessation interventions, the 'number needed to treat' to prevent one death among clinical interventions delivered in primary care (NNT) is relatively low comparative to other primary care interventions, with the NNT for NRT being 23.^{iii iv} Accordingly, it is our goal to support GPs to continue the progress they are making assisting their patients with smoking cessation strategies that includes flexibility in the prescribing of NRTs.

The RACGP will continue its anti-smoking campaign by providing world class resources such as our [Smoking Cessation Guidelines](#), and by supporting legislative reform that aims to reduce the rate of smoking, uptake by youth, as well as exposure to harmful second-hand smoke.

Please feel free to contact me directly on [REDACTED] or contact Mr James Flynn, State Manager RACGP Queensland, on [REDACTED] if you require any further information in relation to this matter.

Best regards,



Dr Bruce Willett FRACGP
Chair RACGP Queensland and RACGP Vice-President

References

- ⁱ The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners. General Practice: Health of the Nation 2022. East Melbourne, Vic: RACGP, 2022.
- ⁱⁱ Hum AM, Robinson LA, Jackson AA, and Ali KS. *Physician communication regarding smoking and adolescent tobacco use*. Paediatrics, 2011; 127(6):e1368–74. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21576307> [accessed on 28/03/2023].
- ⁱⁱⁱ The NNT for cervical cancer screening is 1140; Pipe AL, Evans W, and Papadakis S. Smoking cessation: health system challenges and opportunities. Tobacco Control, 2022; 31(2):340–7. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/35241609> [accessed on 28/03/2023].
- ^{iv} Greenhalgh, EM., Stillman, S., & Ford, Section 7.10 *Role of health professionals and social services*. In Greenhalgh, EM, Scollo, MM and Winstanley, MH [editors]. *Tobacco in Australia: Facts and issues*. Melbourne: Cancer Council Victoria; 2022. Available from <http://www.tobaccoinaustralia.org.au/chapter-7-cessation/7-10-role-of-general-practice-and-other-health-pro> [accessed on 28/03/2023].