

# Media Release

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## NSW voters show appetite for smoking ban outside cafes and restaurants

As election fever heightens, a new poll reveals that the overwhelming majority of voters support the idea of new State legislation to ban smoking in outdoor dining areas.

More than eight out of ten NSW voters believe smoking should be banned from outdoor areas where food or drink is served, according to an independent *Newspoll survey*\* commissioned by Cancer Council and the Heart Foundation.

In a similar survey on this issue in 2006, 69 per cent of NSW adults said they supported a ban on smoking in outdoor dining areas. This suggests there has been a significant increase in public support since before the last election.

It comes just two months after the NSW Government released a discussion paper on its Tobacco Action Plan, inviting public comment on new tobacco laws.

The poll also reveals 90 per cent of voters say there should be more services to help smokers quit, highlighting public sympathy for the difficulties of smokers kicking the habit, while also wanting to avoid second-hand smoke.

"NSW voters are fed up with having to endure toxic tobacco fumes when trying to enjoy a meal outdoors," Anita Tang, Manager of Advocacy and Policy at Cancer Council NSW said.

"The public was asked for its views to a discussion paper on this matter late last year, and this new data shows that not only is a smoke-free outdoor dining good health policy, it is also clearly what voters want.

"Contrary to tobacco industry scare tactics, it's also what eight out of ten\*\* café and restaurant owners want, believing statewide legislation is fairer than leaving it to local councils. Piece this together and we have strong public and business support for a very achievable policy to protect everybody equally."

Tony Thirlwell, Heart Foundation CEO – NSW urged the NSW Government to respond to this strong public support and release the 2011-2015 Tobacco Action Plan.

"If Government had any concerns about the level of public support for new measures to tackle smoking, these figures have removed any last shred of doubt," said Tony Thirlwell, Heart Foundation CEO – NSW.

"Even issues that were considered controversial at the time, such as the smoking ban inside pubs and clubs, now enjoy the backing of nine in ten people," he said.

Both parties need to respond to this voter demand for continued action to reduce the harmful effects of smoking," he added.

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**Notes to editors**

- The Newspann was conducted during February 2011 among a representative sample of 628 NSW voters aged 18+
- \*\*This figure comes from a survey conducted by the Ipsos-Eureka Social Research Institute from 12–27 October 2010.
- Martin O’Shannessy, CEO of Newspann is available for media comment and can provide a more detailed explanation of the survey results.

### **\*The Newspann survey results in more detail**

#### Support for changes to tobacco laws in recent years

1. Banning of smoking in cars carrying children under 16 years = 94%  
SUPPORT
2. Banning smoking inside pubs and clubs = 90% SUPPORT
3. Restricting the placement of tobacco products in stores so they are out of sight = 83% SUPPORT

#### Possible future changes to tobacco laws

1. Banning smoking in children’s playgrounds = 96% SUPPORT
2. Banning smoking at or near the entrance to public buildings = 83%  
SUPPORT
3. Banning smoking in outdoor areas where food or drink is served = 83%  
SUPPORT
4. Banning the sale of tobacco products in vending machines = 75% SUPPORT
5. Providing more services to help people quit = 90% SUPPORT