



## Experiences of smoke-drift and preferences for smoke-free housing

### Prevalence of smoke-drift in multi-unit housing

Several surveys of smoke-drift in multi-unit housing show that between 28 and 53 per cent of residents in non-smoking units are exposed to second-hand smoke drift. Between 9 and 25 per cent of residents reported smoke-drift often or daily.<sup>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7</sup>

### Degree of annoyance caused by smoke-drift

In a recent review of strata law in NSW, smoke-drift into non-smoking units was the most common complaint received in the consultation process.<sup>8</sup> It was a vexing issue for residents who expressed health concerns and asked for greater regulation. Residents resented having to close doors and windows and having enjoyment of their homes ruined.

Surveys show the majority of residents in non-smoking units who experienced smoke-drift were bothered by it. The level of annoyance can be intense. In one survey 59 per cent of owner-occupiers who experienced second-hand smoke incursions into their unit said it bothered them a lot.<sup>5</sup> In another study, 37 per cent of the renters who experience smoke-drift in their units said it bothered them a lot or so much they were thinking of moving.<sup>2</sup>

### Support for smoke-free multi-unit housing

In the recent NSW strata law consultation process a majority of people favoured a smoking ban on

balconies and a significant minority favoured a complete ban on smoking.

Unsurprisingly, there are high levels of support for smoke-free policies in multi-unit housing by non-smoking residents. Between 61 and 82 per cent of non-smoking multi-unit residents supported a ban on smoking in the building compared to between 16 and 41 per cent support from smokers.<sup>1, 3, 6, 7</sup>

When preferences of smoking and non-smoking residents are combined, support for a complete smoking ban in apartment buildings ranges from 41 to 64 per cent.<sup>1-6, 9</sup>

Residents who experienced a neighbour's smoke-drift had a much stronger preference for a smoke-free building than people who had not been exposed. Support for smoke-free multi-unit housing is also significantly stronger among people living with children.<sup>3, 6, 9</sup>

## How to quit

**Call Quitline 13 QUIT (13 7848) for free information, practical assistance and support.**

**Discuss quitting smoking with a health professional and plan your quitting strategy together.**

**Consider using pharmacotherapy such as Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT), Bupropion Hcl or Varenicline.**

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**Endnotes:** <sup>1</sup> Hennrikus D, Pentel PR, Sandell SD. Preferences and practices among renters regarding smoking restrictions in apartment buildings. *Tobacco Control*. 2003; 12(2):189-194. <sup>2</sup> Hewett MJ, Sandell SD, Anderson J, Niebuhr M. Secondhand smoke in apartment buildings: renter and owner or manager perspectives. *Nicotine & Tobacco Research*. 2007; 9(1):S39-S47. <sup>3</sup> King BA, Cummings KM, Mahoney MC, Hyland AJ. Multiunit housing residents' experiences and attitudes toward smoke-free policies. *Nicotine & Tobacco Research*. 2010; 12(6):598-605. <sup>4</sup> Licht AS, King BA, Travers MJ, Rivard C, Hyland AJ. Attitudes, Experiences, and Acceptance of Smoke-Free Policies Among US Multiunit Housing Residents. *Am J Public Health*. 2012; 102(10): 1868-1871. <sup>5</sup> Hewett MJ, Orland WH, Brock BE, Heim CJ. Secondhand Smoke and Smokefree Policies in Owner-Occupied Multi-Unit Housing. *Am J Prev Med*, 2012; 43(5S3):187-196. <sup>6</sup> Køster B, Brink AL, Clemmensen IH. 'Neighbour smoke' – exposure to secondhand smoke in multiunit dwellings in Denmark in 2013: a cross-sectional study. *Tobacco Control* 2013; 22:190-193. <sup>7</sup> Ballor DL, Henson H, MacGuire K. Support for No-Smoking Policies Among Residents of Public Multiunit Housing Differs by Smoking Status. *J Community Health* 2013; 38:1074-1080. <sup>8</sup> Global Access Partners Pty Ltd. Strata laws Online consultation. Final Report. April 2012. <sup>9</sup> Hood NE, Kerketic AK, Klein EG, Wewers ME Pirie P. Individual, Social, and Environmental Factors Associated with Support for Smoke-Free Housing Policies Among Subsidized Multiunit Housing Tenants. *Nic & Tob Research* 2013;15(6);1075-1083.