



HEALTH SURVEY
Everyday

Executive Summary

Cancer Council Queensland's Everyday Health Survey on tobacco explored community knowledge, attitudes and support for current and proposed tobacco control measures in Queensland.

Queensland is uniquely placed to be a global leader in tobacco control, having recently introduced the most progressive smoke free laws of any jurisdiction in the world. Despite this, 450,000 Queensland adults (12%) still smoke daily. With two in three smokers dying as a result of their habit, and two per cent of all tobacco-related deaths caused by second-hand smoking, it is imperative that we continue our efforts to eliminate smoking for future generations.

To this end, the findings reveal overwhelming support for existing tobacco control laws in Queensland (88%) and significant support for a range of possible new tobacco control measures (54% to 85%). Among these were increasing the legal age to sell tobacco (85%); banning smoking in the presence

of children (84%); requiring tobacco retailers to hold a licence (84%); and banning tobacco vending machines (82%). A majority of respondents also supported a proposal to outlaw the sale of tobacco to anyone born after 2001 (67%) and to make it illegal for those born after 2001 to smoke tobacco (58%).

These results unequivocally demonstrate that the majority of Queenslanders want ongoing action to expand smoke free policies and legislation, to better protect all Queenslanders from the harmful impacts of smoking and prevent tobacco-related illness and disease.



Overview of project

Despite a substantial reduction in the smoking rate over the past three decades, tobacco smoking remains a leading cause of preventable death and disease in Queensland and is a significant contributor to health inequalities.

Given the significant implications for cancer control, Cancer Council Queensland is committed to working with governments, businesses, and the community to promote smoking reduction strategies which protect people from the harmful effects of tobacco smoke. Our focus is on three areas: creating smoke-free environments to reduce exposure to second-hand smoke, empowering smokers to quit, and discouraging uptake of the habit.

The Everyday Health Survey is the second in a series of surveys designed to give Queenslanders a voice and engage them in a conversation about the health issues that affect all members of the community.

The Everyday Health Survey Tobacco Project was launched on September 1 2016, coinciding with the introduction of new statewide smoke-free spaces laws in Queensland. The survey was active for four weeks, providing an opportunity for Queenslanders to have their say on current and proposed tobacco control measures. The survey successfully attracted 736 responses.

Respondents

The respondents were predominantly:

- Female (82%)
- 30 years or older (80%)
- Tertiary educated (81%)
- Married or in a de facto relationship (66%)
- In households without children (67%)
- Employed (79%)
- Non-smokers (92%)
- Living in southeast Queensland (66%).

Only five per cent of respondents were daily smokers in comparison with 12% of the Queensland population. Over half of respondents who smoked said they wish they had never started (51%) and wanted to quit (56%), with about two thirds (65%) having tried to quit in the past. The 30% of respondents who had successfully quit smoking cited a number of motivations, including health concerns for themselves and others, the price of cigarettes, and prompting from family and friends.

Findings

We asked Queenslanders to share their views about existing smoke-free laws and a range of possible tobacco control measures that could be implemented in the future. These included strategies such as increasing the legal age to sell cigarettes, a generational phase out of smoking and banning smoking in multi-unit dwellings.

Support for existing tobacco control laws

We found the vast majority of respondents were supportive of existing tobacco control laws in Queensland (88%) and were aware of the harms of second-hand smoke (98%). These findings suggest Queenslanders are accepting of legislative measures to reduce tobacco consumption and would be supportive of approaches that reduce exposure to second-hand smoke.

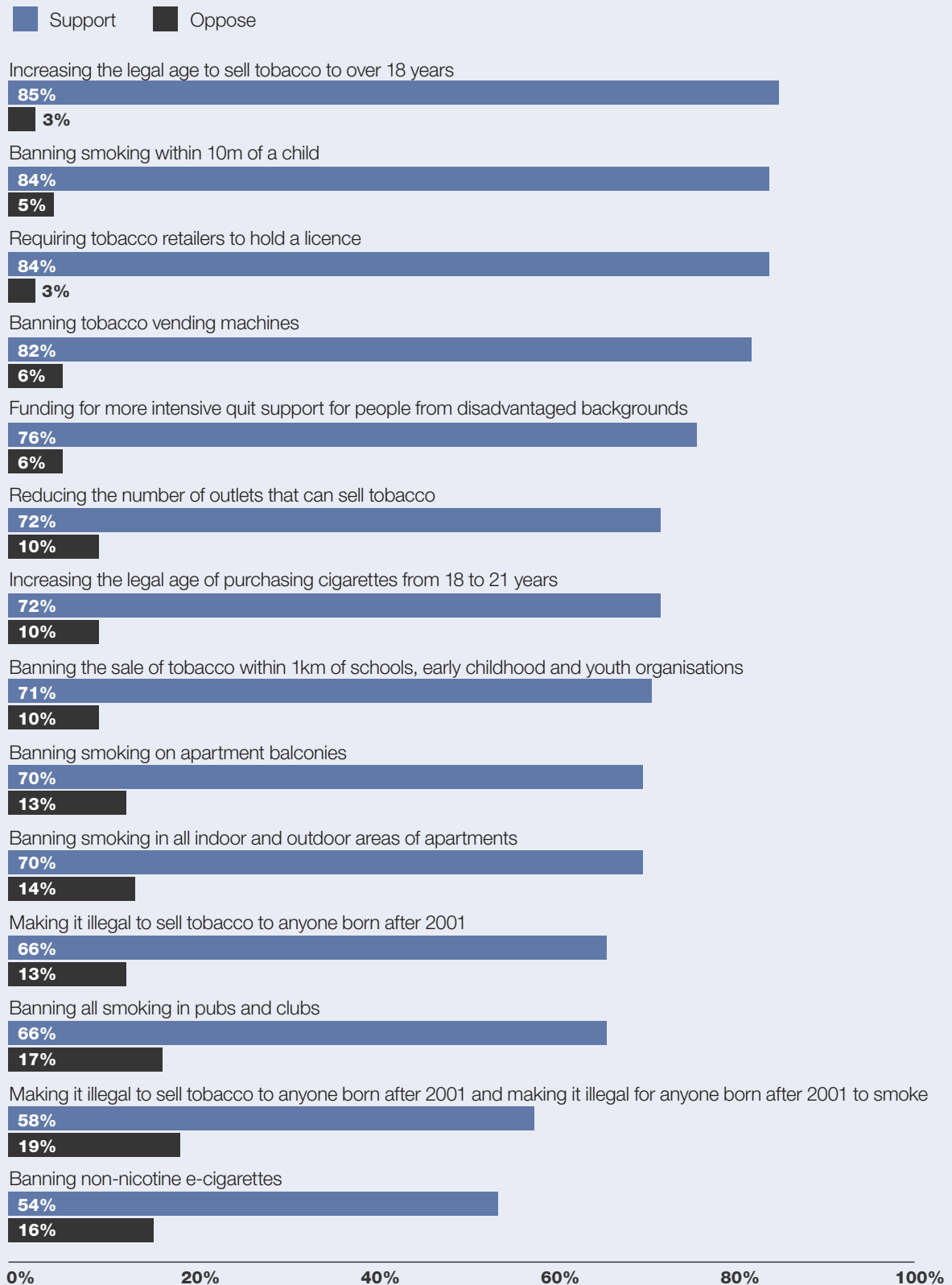
Support for proposed tobacco control measures

We asked the Queensland community to share their perspectives on a range of tobacco control measures that have not been implemented in Queensland. Results show that community support for the suggested tobacco control measures ranged from 54% to 85%. This high level of community support suggests that Queenslanders support Government action to create a smoke-free future.

Proposed measures that attracted both the highest level of support and lowest level of opposition were banning smoking within 10m of children, increasing the legal age to sell tobacco, and implementing a licensing scheme for tobacco retailers.



Graph 1: Level of support and opposition for proposed tobacco control measures in Queensland.



Those who provided a neutral response to the above proposals were not counted as being either for or against the relevant proposition.

Findings (cont.)

Those who didn't report support or opposition to the proposed laws, reported a neutral response.

Support for laws relating to the sale of tobacco

Increase the legal age to sell tobacco

Under the current Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act minors are permitted to sell cigarettes when employed by tobacco retailers. Evidence shows that minors are more likely to sell cigarettes to other minors, highlighting the importance of requiring anyone who sells tobacco to be aged over 18. Notably, the survey revealed strong positive sentiment for strategies designed to reduce harms to young people, with 85% of respondents supporting this measure.

Require tobacco retailers to hold a license

The Queensland Government is currently undertaking a stakeholder consultation into a positive licensing scheme for tobacco retailers. A licensing regime will allow the systematic monitoring of tobacco retailers in Queensland, ensuring enforcement of relevant legislation and providing further protection against breaches. A majority of Queenslanders welcome this approach, with 84% of survey respondents indicating their support.

Ban tobacco vending machines

Tobacco vending machines are an ongoing concern for cancer control, offering unfettered access to cigarettes and normalising the habit in settings which are typically frequented by Queenslanders who may be particularly vulnerable to smoking. Encouragingly, the proposal to ban tobacco vending machines in Queensland attracted significant support, with 82% of respondents backing the suggestion.

Reduce the number of outlets that can sell tobacco

The more available tobacco is, the more people smoke, so restricting access to cigarettes is a key strategy to reduce consumption. Further, cigarettes are more widely available and cheaper in disadvantaged areas compared to more affluent areas, contributing to higher rates of smoking in high-risk communities. As such, one suggested strategy to reduce smoking rates in communities is to reduce the number of tobacco retail outlets in targeted areas. Almost three quarters (72%) of survey respondents expressed support for this proposed initiative.

Support for laws relating to the purchase of tobacco

Increase the legal age to purchase cigarettes to 21 years

A number of jurisdictions around the world have raised the legal age to purchase cigarettes from 18 to 21 years with the aim of preventing the uptake of smoking among youth. Almost three quarters (72%) of respondents expressed support for this measure to be implemented in Queensland.

Generational phase out of tobacco

Queensland is uniquely positioned to progress a generational phase-out of tobacco in order to protect future generations from the harmful impacts of smoking. A phase-out could take the form of a complete ban on smoking for anyone born after 2001, or a ban on the sale of cigarettes to anyone born after 2001. A generational phase-out of tobacco received majority support with 66% of respondents welcoming a ban on the sale of tobacco to anyone born after 2001 and 58% of respondents supporting a complete ban on smoking for anyone born after 2001.

Support for laws relating to smoke-free spaces

Ban the sale of tobacco within a 1km radius of a school or youth based organisation

Research shows that young people are particularly vulnerable to the harmful effects of second-hand smoke and are influenced by adult role-modelling. We also know that the more available tobacco is, the more people smoke and the more likely it is that children will start smoking. 71% of respondents supported a ban on the sale of cigarettes within a 10km radius of a school or youth-based organisations, revealing a high level of concern for preventing young people from taking up the habit.



Ban smoking in the presence of children

About 200,000 Queensland children live in a household with a current smoker and there were about 8000 infants born in 2014 whose long-term health outcomes were compromised as a consequence of maternal smoking during pregnancy. While declining rates of smoking are encouraging, every year a new generation of potential smokers is exposed to role models who smoke, such as parents, normalising the behaviour and perpetuating intergenerational smoking. Stronger laws are needed to stamp out smoking in the presence of children and young people – protecting Queensland's next generation from the tragic toll of tobacco. The survey

results confirm community support for a smoking ban within 10m of a child, with 84% of respondents expressing support.

Implement a complete ban on smoking in pubs and clubs

A total ban on smoking in licensed premises would bring the smoking restrictions in licensed premises into line with all other businesses in Queensland, including restaurants, cafes and sporting facilities. Encouragingly, 66% of respondents support a ban and only 17% oppose it.

Interestingly, the levels of support for a complete ban on smoking in pubs and clubs differed by socioeconomic status. A quarter of respondents from areas of greatest socioeconomic disadvantage opposed the ban (25%) and just over half (52%) supported it. This was in contrast with just 12% of respondents from the most advantaged areas in Queensland opposing the ban and 71% supporting it.

Support for laws relating to smoking in multi-unit housing

A significant number of Queenslanders living in multi-unit housing are consistently exposed to harmful smoke-drift from neighbouring lots, but have no legal recourse to protect themselves and their families from harmful second-hand smoke. Cancer Council Queensland has called for an amendment of the *Body Corporate and Community Management Act 1997* to enable bans on smoking in multi-unit dwellings.

One in five survey respondents lived in multi-unit housing. Alarmingly, almost half of respondents living in multi-unit housing reported being affected by smoke-drift in their own homes. In fact, 22% reported being exposed to smoke-drift every day. Over half (55%) of respondents who were affected by smoke-drift in their own homes said they were extremely concerned about it.



Ban smoking on balconies in multi-unit housing

70% of respondents supported a smoking ban on balconies in multi-unit housing. Interestingly, respondents who lived in multi-unit housing were even more supportive of the proposed ban (77%). There was a significant difference in opinion across socioeconomic groups, with only 58% of respondents from the most disadvantaged areas of Queensland supporting a smoking ban on balconies, compared with 73% of respondents from the most advantaged areas.

Ban smoking completely in multi-unit housing

Respondents reported the same high level of support for a complete ban on smoking in multi-unit dwellings (70%), with slightly higher support among those who currently live in multi-unit housing (74%). The highest levels of support for a complete ban on smoking in multi-unit housing were at the Gold Coast (81%) and in the South West Queensland (81%) region. Of note, the lowest level of support by regional area still represented a majority, whereby around 55% of those in the Wide Bay Burnett region backed the suggestion.

Funding programs to support people to quit smoking

Increase funding to support disadvantaged smokers

While smoking rates have declined significantly over the past 50 years, smoking rates remain alarmingly high among people who experience social disadvantage. Greater support is needed to ensure all Queenslanders can benefit from smoke-free lifestyles and avoid the severe health and financial consequences of smoking. The survey findings reveal that over three quarters (76%) of respondents support an increase in funding to help people from disadvantaged communities quit smoking.

Support for laws relating to electronic cigarettes

Ban non-nicotine e-cigarettes

110,000 Queensland adults are current e-cigarette users, even though e-cigarettes containing liquid nicotine are illegal. Of concern, the sale and use of non-nicotine e-cigarettes remains legal in Queensland – even though they are not scientifically tested to guarantee consumer safety. Evidence suggests that both nicotine and non-nicotine e-cigarettes contribute to the normalisation and habituation of cigarette smoking, particularly among young people, with e-cigarette smokers more likely to take up smoking traditional cigarettes. The majority of survey respondents supported a ban on non-nicotine e-cigarettes (54%), although this differed by age, with only 43% of 18-29 year olds supporting the ban and 29% opposing it.

Suggestions from the community

The Queensland community had their say about the tobacco control initiatives they believed would lower smoking rates across our state.

Increase smoking bans in public places

“I would like to see smoking in all motor vehicles banned especially when driving, considering it is distracting and a safety issue.”

“Smoking should be banned in all public locations. I should be able to walk down the footpath and expect not to have to breath the smoke of others.”

Improve compliance with existing tobacco laws

“The smoking bans outside of hospitals are not currently enforced well.”

Make cigarettes illegal

“Just ban the sale...SIMPLE. If a new product came onto the market that had the same catastrophic health impacts as tobacco it would be instantly banned.”

“I would love to see smoking become illegal completely. It was the reason I lost my dad to brain cancer when I was 14.”

Increase the price of tobacco

“I would like to see cigarettes taxed and priced so high to stop children smoking. I don't like paying taxes to support smoking related diseases in hospitals.”

“I fully support increasing the price of tobacco products.”

More government action on tobacco control

“I would like to see the Queensland Government take stronger action to eliminate smoking in Queensland.”

“Government needs to get more serious about smoking and ban children from commencing the habit. The health effects are crippling our health budgets.”

Health professional education

“Make all doctors/health care workers aware of options to help patients give up.”

Introduce a ‘smoking licence’

“Current smokers register as ‘nicotine addicts’ allowing them to purchase tobacco products of limited quantities i.e. show a card which is scanned/swiped to keep track of amount purchased. Those born after 2001 would not be eligible to register. Those smokers born before 2001 would need free intensive quit support and /or nicotine patches as some are already addicted.”

Community attitudes toward smoking

We asked Queenslanders to share their knowledge and beliefs about smoking in their communities.

- Only 54% of respondents thought that people in their local community understood the harms of smoking, highlighting the need for ongoing community education.
- Only 37% of respondents felt that smokers were considerate of other people when smoking. Interestingly, respondents from low socioeconomic areas were more likely to report that smokers in their community smoked near other people (44%) than respondents from advantaged areas (29%).
- Only 40% of respondents thought that most people in their community abided by existing tobacco control laws, indicating low compliance. There was a significant difference in opinion across socioeconomic areas with over a quarter of respondents from the most disadvantaged areas reporting that no one in their community abided by tobacco control laws compared with just 11% from most advantaged areas.
- Approximately 75% of respondents said they try to avoid smokers in public places indicating that they are concerned with the health impacts of second-hand smoke.
- Encouragingly, 76% of respondents agreed that smoking was one of the worst things you could do for your health, however this was not consistent across socioeconomic areas. Only 67% of respondents from the most disadvantaged areas shared this view compared to 77% of respondents from the most advantaged areas, further highlighting the need for targeted education campaigns for high risk groups.
- Over three quarters (76%) of respondents shared that they would be concerned if a family member or friend started smoking.



Recommendations

These Queensland-first findings emphasise the significant level of community support for ongoing action on tobacco control. In response to community calls for tougher action on tobacco, Cancer Council Queensland will continue to advocate for initiatives to further reduce smoking rates and protect Queenslanders from the harmful effects of second-hand smoke.

1. Advocate for laws that relate to the supply of tobacco in the Queensland community

- Require anyone who sells cigarettes to be 18 years old or over.
- Implement a licensing scheme for tobacco retailers.
- Ban the sale of tobacco from vending machines.
- Restrict the number of tobacco retailers in our community.
- Stop tobacco companies from providing sales incentives to retailers.

2. Advocate for laws that protect children from the harms of tobacco

- Call on Government to conduct a community consultation on a generational phase out of tobacco, including the consideration of increasing the legal age to purchase cigarettes to 21 years.
- Ban smoking in the presence of children.
- Restrict the number of tobacco retailers in close proximity to schools, childcare facilities, and organisations that cater to children and young people.

3. Advocate for laws related to smoking in multi-unit housing

- Ban smoking in all indoor and outdoor areas of apartment buildings.
- Explore options to restrict smoking in public and community housing.

4. Advocate for measures that address high smoking rates in disadvantaged communities

- Increase funding to support people from disadvantaged communities to quit smoking.
- Reduce the availability of tobacco in high risk communities.
- Conduct targeted social marketing campaigns for at-risk groups

5. Advocate for laws to deter people from smoking

- Ban smoking in cars.
- Prohibit the sale of menthol flavoured cigarettes.
- End smoking in premium gambling rooms.
- Expand bans on smoking in public places.
- Ban smoking at universities, technical and further education facilities, and registered training organisations.

Cancer Council Queensland will continue to engage with the community and all levels of government to advocate for a smoke-free Queensland.

BRISBANE

BUNDABERG

CAIRNS

GOLD COAST

MACKAY

ROCKHAMPTON

SUNSHINE COAST

TOOWOOMBA

TOWNSVILLE



 @CCQld

 /cancercouncilqueensland

 /cancer-council-queensland

cancerqld.org.au

