

**Key Messages – Public support for tobacco control policies in the Auckland Council Southern Initiative region:**

1. Cancer Society undertook a survey of 4 local communities in South Auckland to gauge public support for Smokefree. This is the first localised survey of its kind undertaken in the Auckland area.
2. The NZ Government have a goal to be Smokefree by 2025. In-line with this goal, Auckland Council has set 2 targets in the Auckland Plan to make all public places Smokefree by 2025; and to reduce smoking to less than 3% across the 4 South Auckland local board areas (The Southern Initiative).
3. This research was undertaken to provide local views on Smokefree to support Council with their development of the Smokefree policy. This will be voted on at the Auckland Council Parks, Recreation and Heritage Forum on 14th May.
4. This research has found there is very high public support for shared spaces throughout our community to be Smokefree.
  - a. Support was high for child friendly places, such as:
    - i. **playgrounds (94%), Outdoor eating areas (73%) Parks & Sportsfields(71%), music & Sporting events(70%) & beaches (58%)**
  - b. Areas of high pedestrian traffic such as:
    - i. **Building entrances (84%) town Centres (64%), Footpath around local shops(65%)**
  - c. And places people use frequently
    - i. **Transport hubs such as: Bus stops & train stations (76%)**
5. The research also found that people are more likely to go to places if they are Smokefree, places such as;
  - a. **Outdoor eating areas, outdoor music and sporting events; beaches, parks, playgrounds, and sports fields.**
6. The research found **huge support for Smokefree outdoor eating areas** with over 87% of people either 'more' or 'as likely' to visit.
  - a. Over half (51%) those surveyed said they were 'more likely' to visit if the venue was Smokefree.
  - b. And 36% would continue to patronise a Smokefree venue. Making a total of 87% 'as likely' or 'more' likely to visit.
7. Auckland Council can feel confident that not only do people support places being Smokefree, but by making these places Smokefree, they will increase attendance and patronage.
8. A strong message from the research was that people do not want different rules in different areas; they want a consistent Auckland wide Smokefree policy.
9. The survey results also highlighted that the public are not scared of by-laws and actually prefer a by-law council enforced approach.
10. This research shows that Smokefree is important for the community and should be included in planning around all outdoor environments.
11. Auckland's most liveable city is one where we create environments that encourage our children to stay Smokefree.
12. The Cancer Society support Council on their decision to be Smokefree and now is the time to take action on this important issue. Council have prioritised Smokefree in the

Auckland Plan, but to meet these targets by 2025 we now need to go beyond the parks and playgrounds approach and not delay.

13. We need to move into high density and frequently used areas such as transport hubs, outdoor eating areas, building entrances and town centres and this research showed that all of these areas have high public support to be Smokefree.
14. As Auckland's population continues to grow – we will see an increase in the use of our outdoor shared spaces, transport hubs and public events. If Auckland wants to grow into the most liveable city, creating child friendly, healthy shared Smokefree spaces will become crucial.

#### **Why Cancer Society undertook the survey:**

- The NZ Government have set a goal to be Smokefree by 2025.
- In-line with this goal, Auckland Council has included a target in the Auckland Plan to reduce smoking to less than 3% across the Southern Initiative (Otara/Papatoetoe, Manurewa, Mangere, Papakura Local Boards).
- Auckland Council also set a target to make all public spaces Smokefree by 2025.
- Auckland Council is in the final stages of identifying what public places will be covered in the first stage of their Smokefree policy.
- What we know from overseas studies is that people support a wide range of Smokefree areas.
- Public support from overseas cities such as Sydney, Brisbane, and New York is high for Smokefree public spaces. The aim of this research was to gauge public support from local Auckland residents around Smokefree public places. .

#### **About the Survey:**

- Cancer Society Auckland division undertook a survey to gauge support for Smokefree across 4 different local board areas in the Southern Initiative. These Local Boards are: Otara/Papatoetoe, Manurewa, Mangere, Papakura
- The Local Board areas surveyed were selected for 2 reasons:
  1. To get the views of people living in areas with the highest smoking rates.
  2. To inform Auckland Council about local support for Smokefree public places.
- 400 people were telephone surveyed by Reid Research, 100 in each Local Board area and were representative of the demographic profile of each Local Board.
- People were asked specifically about 9 locations and whether they would support these places to be Smokefree (Playgrounds, Entrances outside buildings, Bus-stops and train stations, outdoor eating areas, parks and sports fields, Outdoor music & sporting events, Footpaths outside local shops, Town centres, Beaches) and whether it would change their attendance/usage of this public place

## What we found from the Survey:

### 1. Public Support is high:

This research has found that Public support for shared spaces throughout the community to be Smokefree is very high.

a. Support was high for child friendly places, such as:

***playgrounds (94%), Outdoor eating areas (73%) Parks & Sportsfields(71%), music & Sporting events(70%) & beaches (58%),***

b. And areas of high pedestrian traffic such as:

***i. Building entrances (84%) town Centres (64%), Footpath around local shops(65%)***

c. And places people use frequently

***i. Transport hubs such as: Bus stops & train stations (76%)***

- People are more likely to go to places such as outdoor eating areas, beaches, outdoor music and sporting events, and parks, playgrounds, and sports fields if these places are Smokefree.
- Auckland Council should feel reassured that public support among those surveyed is high for places to be Smokefree and is high across all the places that people were asked about in the survey.

### 2. People support consistency and a by-law approach

- A strong message from the research was that people (74%) do not want different rules in different areas; they want a consistent Auckland wide Smokefree policy.
- Whether the Smokefree policy will be a suburb by suburb approach or consistent across Auckland is an issue being decided upon at the Forum on May 14<sup>th</sup>. There is a risk that it could be a suburb by suburb approach.

The survey results also highlighted that the public are not scared of by-laws and actually prefer a by-law council enforced approach (58%). Twice as many people want a council enforced by-law approach (58%) versus a voluntary Smokefree approach which relies on the public to enforce (31%).

Auckland Council can be confident that a consistent region-wide Smokefree approach, backed up by bylaws is what the community support.

### 3. Smokefree is likely to increase attendance and patronage:

- The research also found that people are more likely to go to places if they are Smokefree, places such as;

- Outdoor eating areas, outdoor music and sporting events; beaches, parks, playgrounds, and sports fields.
- The research showed that not only do people support these places being Smokefree, but by making these places Smokefree, it could result in an increase of attendance and patronage.
- The research found huge support for Smokefree outdoor eating areas with over 87% of people either 'more likely' or 'as likely' to visit.
  - Over half (51%) of those surveyed said they were 'more likely' to visit if the venue was Smokefree.
  - And 36% would continue to patronise a Smokefree venue. Making a total of 87% 'as likely' or 'more' likely to visit.
- People are more likely to take their children to beaches, playgrounds, parks and sports fields if they are Smokefree.
  - Of those that had taken their children to these places in the past 12 months
    - 94% are 'more likely' or 'as likely' to take their children if they are Smokefree
    - Over half (53%) 'more likely' to take children
    - And 41% would continue to go regardless
- Making places Smokefree is a great way to increase attendance at parks, playgrounds, events, beaches, outdoor eating areas.

### **Other key messages - It's good for our Community:**

- This research shows that people would use shared spaces more often if they were Smokefree within their communities.
- As Auckland's population continues to grow – we will see an increase in the use of our outdoor shared spaces, transport hubs and public events.
- If Auckland wants to grow into the most liveable city creating child friendly, healthy shared Smokefree spaces will become crucial.
- Auckland's most liveable city is one where we create environments that encourage our children to stay Smokefree.
- The average age that children start smoking is 14 years and the more places children are exposed to smoking the greater likelihood that they will start.
- Over 5000 New Zealanders die from smoking related illnesses and approximately 1,700 of those are Aucklanders. These deaths are preventable. By creating a Smokefree Auckland we can make a difference.

### **Survey Findings:**

#### **Outdoor dining:**

- Public support is very high for Smokefree outdoor dining areas with nearly three quarters of people in support (73%).
- Over half (51%) in the survey said they were 'more likely' to visit outdoor eating venues if they were Smokefree, and 36% were 'as likely' to visit.

- A total of 87% of respondents said they would visit Smokefree outdoor dining areas.
- ***Smokefree outdoor dining is good for business.***

#### **Building entrances:**

- Public support is very high (84%) for building entrances to be Smokefree.
- ***Smokefree building entranceways have been implemented in most states across Australia.***

#### **Public Transport Hubs:**

- Over three quarters (76%) of respondents want transport hubs (bus stations and train stations) to be Smokefree.
- ***Public transport hubs are often located high density areas and used by all ages, ie, school transport for children.***
- ***By creating Smokefree areas we are supporting people to quit and encouraging our children to stay Smokefree.***

#### **Events:**

- Almost three quarters (70%) of people want outdoor music and sporting events to be Smokefree.
- 87% of participants would attend a Smokefree outdoor event.
- Over a third (38%) of participants said they were 'more likely' to attend an event if it was Smokefree and 49% were 'as likely' to attend (not discouraged).
- ***Many public events held in Auckland are attended by family groups including children and young people.***
- ***Making an event Smokefree is a way of increasing attendance.***
- ***We want to create environments that encourage our children to stay Smokefree.***

#### **Beaches:**

- The majority of respondents want beaches to be Smokefree (58%).
- One third (33%) of respondents would be 'more likely' to use beaches if they were Smokefree.
- 58% would be 'as likely' to use beaches if they were Smokefree.
- 91% total of respondents would visit the beach if it was Smokefree.
- Only 7% said they would be less likely to use a beach if it was Smokefree.
- ***Smokefree beaches makes sense given most beaches border park land and beaches on regional parkland are already Smokefree.***

#### **Taking children to sportsfields, playgrounds, parks and beaches:**

- 53% of participants are 'more likely' to take children to sports fields, playgrounds, parks or beaches if they are Smokefree.

- Only 5% said they would be 'less likely' to take children to these places if they were SF.
- 94% of respondents said that they would visit Smokefree sports fields, playgrounds, parks or beaches with children.

### **Parks & Sports fields:**

- There was high public support (70%) for parks & sports fields being SF.
- Over a third (35%) of these respondents said they would be 'more likely' to visit parks and sports fields if they were Smokefree.
- 54% were 'as likely' to visit and would not be discouraged by Smokefree.
- Only 8% who said they were 'less likely' to go to parks and sports fields if they were SF.
- A total of 89% responded that they would frequent Smokefree parks and sports fields.

### **Playgrounds:**

- There was extremely strong support for SF playgrounds (94%).

### **Footpaths outside your local block of shops:**

- 65% of respondents would like footpaths outside their local block of shops to be Smokefree.

### **Outdoor areas in town centres:**

- Approximately two-thirds of respondents (64%) would like outdoor areas in town centres to be Smokefree.

### **Smokefree by-laws and consistency:**

- Almost twice as many participants wanted by-laws (58%) as wanted a voluntary ban (31%)
- There was a clear preference for one set of rules for all of Auckland (74%) compared to having rules for each local area (19%) this was seen in both smokers and non-smokers.

### **Support by Smokers:**

Smokers and non-smokers were interviewed in the sample and this was representative of the smoking rates in that Local Board area.

- The majority of smokers supported Smokefree in most of the public places
  - o Majority support - in playgrounds, outside building entrances, bus stops and train stations, outdoor eating places, parks and sportsfields, outdoor music and sporting events
  - o Less than majority support Smokefree in beaches, footpaths to local shops, and outdoor areas in town centres
- A total of 91% of smokers are 'as likely' or 'more likely' to take their children to playgrounds, sportfields, parks or beaches if they are Smokefree.
  - o Smokers are 'more likely' (35%) to take their children to these places if Smokefree
  - o 'As likely' (56%) to take their children