

29 April 2010

MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release



College of GPs welcomes government anti-smoking action

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) congratulates the Federal Government for its commitment in providing a comprehensive anti-smoking package, which will increase the tobacco excise of 25 per cent and introduce plain packaging for tobacco products.

RACGP President Dr Chris Mitchell said this move was an important step to ensure that smoking rates continued to decline steadily.

“Smoking remains the risk factor with the highest levels of disease – such as lung and other cancers, heart disease, stroke, emphysema and other chronic lung diseases – and death.

“This commitment by the Federal Government will help save the lives of many Australians and improve the overall health of our communities. In particular, we welcome the cigarette price increases to be introduced by the government, as this has been shown to be effective in cutting smoking rates, especially among young people,” he said.

Dr Mitchell said that GPs know that spending just a few minutes talking to patients about quitting smoking can lead to behavioural change.

“Doctors can assist patients wanting to quit by helping them to set a quit date, identifying situations and behaviours that encourage the patient to smoke and advising on managing these impulses and providing self help materials.

“The benefits of quitting smoking are well established. Successfully quitting smoking can result in a boost to your life expectancy by up to ten years. If you want to quit, make the time to see your GP and kick the habit,” he said.

GPs can find more information in the RACGP’s *Smoking Cessation Guidelines for General Practitioners* at www.racgp.org.au/guidelines/smokingcessation and the RACGP SNAP Guide at www.racgp.org.au/guidelines/snap.

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About the RACGP

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) sets and maintains the standards for quality clinical practice, education and training, and research in Australian general practice, and represents Australia's urban and rural general practitioners. Visit www.racgp.org.au.