**Media Release Template**

[HEADLINE OPTIONS]

**World Smokefree Day 2016 - Most smokers want to quit**

**World Smokefree Day 2016 - Smokers keen to quit**

The rate of smoking in New Zealand continues to drop, with rates going from 20.7% in 2006 to 15.1% in 2013 according to the Census.

[NAME AND ORGANISATION], says “It’s encouraging that people are continuing to quit, allowing them to lead and enjoy a smokefree life. It reinforces that most smokers want to quit, but they don’t always have the support they need and don’t always know how.”

World Smokefree Day on 31 May is about encouraging people across New Zealand to quit by raising awareness of how people can become smokefree and the support available to them.

Research indicates that at least eight out of every 10 people who smoke regret starting, and six in every 10 have tried quitting in the last five years.

[NAME AND ORGANISATION], says “We know that quitting smoking isn’t easy, it takes courage to do it but in the end it’s worth it. The benefits of not being a smoker and leading a healthy life make it all worthwhile. There is a lot of support out there to help people so they don’t feel alone and to encourage them along the way.”

“Our job,” explains [NAME AND ORGANISATION], “is to make it as easy as possible to quit. There’s effective advice and support for those who want to quit and we can connect people with the services and provide them with tools and strategies that work best for them.”

Whether it is face-to-face or phone support services, Txt2quit, online blogs or applications like Goalpost which reward and connect you with friends and supporters, there is a lot of help available to motivate you to become smokefree.

“Some people quit with a friend, others know their whānau are in their corner cheering them on – you don’t have to do it alone. It’s about empowering people for their own futures, free of addiction. We’ve all got a role to play in supporting that,” [NAME] explains.

[NAME AND ORGANISATION], says “It’s important people realise if they haven’t been able to quit, that it’s not a failure and not to give up. It’s all part of the Quit journey. For some people it can take more than one attempt to give up smoking. The fact that people have taken the steps to quit smoking is a positive start and we encourage people to use all the tools and support available as much as possible to help them.”

If you are a smoker yourself and want to discourage others from taking it up or there is someone you know in your family that is thinking about quitting there are things you can do to support them. It might be as simple as creating a smokefree home and car, or considering turning quitting into a team event.

You can also show your support by respecting people’s decision to quit and their right to be smokefree by standing by them and offering words of encouragement. All these things can make a difference to work towards becoming smokefree.

“Tobacco use is declining but it still kills more than 5000 New Zealanders every year.

World Smokefree Day provides an opportunity to join with others around the world and take a step towards a smokefree future.”

**For more information please contact [name, organisation, contact details].**

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**Notes to reporter:**

* For more information on World Smokefree Day, go to: [www.worldsmokefreeday.org.nz](http://www.worldsmokefreeday.org.nz)
* World Smokefree Day was created by the World Health Organisation in 1987. In other countries it is known as World No Tobacco Day.