

Smoke Free Outdoor Dining – A Collaborative Project with Public Health

Description

Health Promotion and Public Health Unit work collaboratively on tobacco control to improve the health of the population that live and work in the Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District (NBMLHD). Health Promotion educates the community and health professionals in smoking cessation, and supports policies or practices promote a smoke free lifestyle and environment. The Public Health Unit monitors and enforces compliance with tobacco legislation. In July 2015 smoking in commercial outdoor dining venues became illegal under 'The Smoke Free Environment Act 2000'. This change was to protect non-smokers from second hand smoke that is just as harmful to people's health as smoking itself. Health Promotion and Public Health worked together on the Local Health District implementation of the community and retailer education campaign to ensure a high level of compliance once the law came into effect on 6 July 2015.

Objectives and Aims

The Smoke Free Outdoor Dining Campaign was designed and implemented in the NBMLHD to:

- educate commercial outdoor dining proprietors of their obligations under the Smoke Free Environment Act from 6 July 2015.
- educate the community of the introduction of the outdoor dining smoking bans.

Achievements

- Successful partnership between Health Promotion and Public Health that continues to work on tobacco control.
- Joint planning and implementation of the local community and retailer education campaign
- Presentations to five (5) Liquor Accords to educate licensed venues, pubs and clubs of their obligations under the Act. Liquor Accords are voluntary industry-based partnerships working in local communities to ensure entertainment venues and precincts are safe and enjoyable for everyone.



- Personal visits to over 180 cafes and restaurants to educate proprietors and patrons about the smoking bans, providing proprietors with retailer guides, posters and mandatory signage.
- Development and delivery of 47,000 coasters to 28 different pubs, clubs and licensed venues to help inform their patrons of the smoking bans.
- Incorporation of community education flyers into all events in 2015, e.g. Youth Week, World No Tobacco Day, Western Sydney University Diversity Fest, Mental Health Week and NAIDOC.
- Posts on social media such as Facebook.
- Articles in local newspapers and in NBM News.

Future Directions

Health Promotion and Public Health continue to work collaboratively on creating smoke free environments. Currently this collaboration involves monitoring compliance of the Smoke Free Health Care policy by quarterly observations on the Nepean Hospital campus.

Program Outcomes

The 2015 Smoke Free Outdoor Dining Campaign has resulted in more smoke-free environments for the NBMLHD community. This is evidenced by the very few complaints about smoking in outdoor dining areas received by Public Health. Compliance rates continue to remain high.

Fast Facts on smoke free outdoor dining laws

- Smoking is banned in outdoor dining areas where food is served
- The law applies to cafes, restaurants, licensed venues such as pubs and clubs
- An on-the-spot fine of \$300 applies to smokers
- The proprietor can be fined \$5,500 per smoker for breaches of the law
- Approximately 75% of the NSW community support smoking bans in outdoor dining areas.

Fast facts about smoking

- Smoking can cause heart disease, stroke, emphysema and other serious long term illnesses as well as cancer of the lung, mouth, throat, gums, kidney and bladder.
- The estimated rate of smoking for NBMLHD in 2014 was 15.7% which is similar to that within NSW 15.6% (HealthStats NSW).
- The rate of smoking attributable hospitalisations in NBMLHD of 596.7 per 100,000 was higher than the rate for NSW 543.9 per 100,000 (2013-14 data, HealthStats NSW)