



Department of Health  
Government of Western Australia

Public Affairs

## ***Media Statement***

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May 7, 2003

### **Tobacco control trends show money and lives saved**

Department of Health Director General Mike Daube today said if current trends continue tobacco control efforts will have a dramatic impact on smoking rates, improvements in health and a reduction in health costs across the State.

Speaking at the WA Tobacco Control Forum in Subiaco, Mr Daube said that in the 20 years of Quit campaigning in WA, smoking prevalence had reduced from 32 per cent in 1984 to 23 per cent in 2000, 500,000 smokers had quit and at least 10,000 premature deaths had been prevented.

Mr Daube said analysis of Department of Health data predicted that if smoking prevalence was to reduce further to 10 per cent by 2010, there would be a further:

- 1290 West Australian lives saved during that period alone;
- an estimated saving of \$83.7 million for the health system (due to fewer hospital admissions); and
- 20,258 fewer hospital admissions.

“These figures show the outstanding benefits that can be gained with continued efforts in the area of tobacco control,” he said.

“We urge all smokers to quit on Tuesday, May 13 which is Quit Day.

“There is nothing better they can do for their health.

“Cigarette smoking is the single, largest, preventable cause of death and illness in our community, and in Western Australia accounts for more than 1500 deaths each year.”

Today's Tobacco Control Forum marks 20 years of Quit campaigning in Western Australia.

“We have brought together some of Australia’s leaders in tobacco control reform to highlight the major achievements of the past 20 years of tobacco control in WA, and to discuss the priorities and possible future strategies for tobacco control,” Mr Daube said.

“Reducing the number of Australians smoking is a national issue and the forum has succeeded in outlining Western Australia’s current position, and poses some different directions we can take for the future.”

Ends.

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