

MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday 1 November 2018

Cancer Council Australia Welcomes Singapore's Standardised Packaging Tobacco Reforms

Australia's leading cancer charity, Cancer Council Australia has congratulated a move by the Singaporean Ministry of Health to introduce standardised packaging and enlarged health warnings on tobacco products.

The new regulations will mean all tobacco products sold in Singapore will have the size of mandatory graphic health warnings increased from the existing 50% to cover 75% of the packaging surface and all products will be required to be free from logos, colours, brand images and promotional.

Tobacco use is a major health issue in Singapore, despite its long history of strong tobacco control measures. More than 2,000 Singaporeans die prematurely from smoking-related diseases annually and one in five men in Singapore smoke daily.

Paul Grogan, Chair of the Tobacco Issues Committee said, "This is a great day for public health in Singapore. In 2012, Australia became the first country in the world to introduce standardised or plain packaging and since then, it has exceeded expectations in reducing smoking rates.

"In its first three years, plain packaging contributed to a quarter of the reduction in smoking rates in Australia and we hope that through these new measures Singapore will be able to achieve similar results.

"Smoking kills two out of three long-term users and Singapore has shown great leadership in helping to improve the health of the nation with today's announcement.

"These measures are also in line with Singapore's obligations as a party to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control.

"Singapore will be the first country in South-East Asia to introduce standardised packaging and the Singapore Health Promotion Board and Ministry of Health should be commended for promoting a comprehensive set of supporting measures to support standardised packaging such as tobacco tax, cessation support and advertising bans.

We hope other countries in the region will take Singapore's lead and introduce similar reforms," Paul continued.

Other countries to already adopt similar standardised packaging measures include France, the United Kingdom, Norway, Ireland, New Zealand and Hungary.

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