

Consensus statement

Smokefree dining and drinking legislation in Victoria

We welcome the Victorian Government's commitment to introduce smokefree outdoor dining across the state from 1 August 2017.

We call on all parties to ensure that outdoor drinking areas are also covered by these laws, in order to protect customers and staff from the serious harms of second-hand smoke, to support the efforts of people who have, or are trying to, quit, and to show our children that smoking is not a necessary part of socialising in Victoria.

Legislation that excludes outdoor drinking from the proven public health benefits of smokefree areas will potentially create a loophole that allows venues to ban people from eating in outdoor areas. This is an early trend emerging in NSW, which recently introduced smokefree dining only. This would be unpopular with the 87 per cent of Victorians who do not smoke. The legislation will have the unintended consequence of effectively promoting alcohol consumption without food in outdoor areas where smoking is allowed.

Queensland has had in place, for nearly a decade, a practical and fair model that makes both outdoor dining and drinking areas smokefree, while allowing certain licenced venues to designate part of their outdoor area for smoking under conditions appropriately designed to minimise exposure to second-hand smoke. Seventy per cent of Victorian adults—and we, the undersigned—support this model.

The vast majority of Victorians and the tens of thousands of visitors to our state expect to be able to enjoy a meal or a drink outdoors without being exposed to toxic and unpleasant smoke. Our hospitality staff—who have no choice but to work in these areas—deserve to be protected from workplace dangers irrespective of whether they are serving a meal or a drink. And none of us want our children to see smoking as an acceptable part of socialising outdoors.

We urge you to choose the model—smokefree outdoor dining AND drinking—that will ensure Victoria continues to be a national leader in protecting the health of its citizens and visitors and remains the state with the best liveability in Australia.

Signed



Todd Harper
CEO, Cancer Council Victoria



Dr Tony Bartone MBBS FRACGP MBA
President, AMA Victoria





Dr Sarah White
Director, Quit Victoria



David Towl
President (Victoria)
Australian Health Promotion Association



Robin Ould
Chief Executive, Asthma Foundation
Victoria



Diana Heggie
CEO, Heart Foundation Victoria



Dr Stephen Liew
President, Australian Dental Association
Victorian Branch



Alice Pryor
Campaigns Manager,
Parents' Voice



John Rogerson
CEO, Australian Drug Foundation



Brian Vandenberg
President, VIC Branch, Public Health
Association Australia



Jason Chuen
Chair, Victorian Regional Committee,
Royal Australasian College of
Surgeons



Jess Walsh
Secretary, United Voice Victoria



Sharon McGowan
CEO, Stroke Foundation



Jill Gallagher AO
CEO, VACCHO



John Rasa
Chair, Victorian Chronic Disease
Prevention Alliance

