

Australian governments urged to focus on supply reduction to end tobacco sales

November 15 2021



Credit: CC0 Public Domain

University of Queensland researchers have called on governments to quicken the pace towards a smoke-free Australia by increasing their attention on reducing the availability of cigarettes.

UQ School of Public Health Associate Professor Coral Gartner, Director of the NHMRC Centre of Research Excellence on Achieving the Tobacco Endgame, said governments have predominantly focused on consumers when introducing measures to reduce smoking rates.

"We are now calling on governments to focus on retail supply, which is the critical link between manufacturers and consumers," Dr. Gartner said.

"This is the next natural step towards controlling the [tobacco use](#), as supported by a growing number of [tobacco](#) control advocacy organizations."

The move is gaining momentum internationally with North American city councils, Beverley Hills and Manhattan Beach ending [tobacco sales](#) on the first of January this year.

The Netherlands has also passed laws preventing supermarkets from selling cigarettes from 2024, and New Zealand has proposed new measures that include significantly reducing the number of tobacco retail outlets.

Dr. Gartner said researchers have highlighted several reasons why governments should introduce target end dates for tobacco sales and help retailers make the transition to a smoke-free society in a perspective article in the *Medical Journal of Australia*.

She said [government intervention](#) would provide tobacco retailers with certainty and assistance in future planning, make it easier for people to quit smoking, and assist the government to plan for reductions in tobacco tax revenue.

"Our motivation is to assist the government to manage tobacco supply

more effectively," Dr. Gartner said.

"Most international governments, including Australia, are lagging behind the significant public support for ending tobacco retailing.

"For example, research shows half of all adults in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, England and Hong Kong want tobacco sales phased out," Associate Professor Gartner said.

Allowing cigarettes to continue to be widely sold in general retail shops does not match their harmfulness and addictiveness.

"Furthermore, industry self-regulation and voluntary approaches won't reduce tobacco retailing to meet the government goal proposed in the draft National Preventive Health Strategy of reducing smoking to below 5 percent by 2030," she said.

"That's why it's time for the [government](#) to focus on supply reduction and plan an end date for tobacco retailing."

The full perspective article is published in the *MJA*.

More information: Coral E Gartner et al, It is time for governments to support retailers in the transition to a smoke-free society, *Medical Journal of Australia* (2021). [DOI: 10.5694/mja2.51312](https://doi.org/10.5694/mja2.51312)

Provided by University of Queensland

Citation: Australian governments urged to focus on supply reduction to end tobacco sales (2021, November 15) retrieved 17 July 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2021-11-australian-urged-focus-reduction-tobacco.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.