

A SMOKEFREE CITY

A case study for smokefree outdoor policy

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SIGNIFICANCE:

In New Zealand over 90% of the 67 local government authorities have some 'educational' outdoor smokefree policies, but these are not enforceable by law, and are usually only for playgrounds and parks. This may be an important deficit, given that effective smokefree outdoor policies can reduce the normalisation of smoking, and aid quitting. **Cities that are completely smokefree outside could be part of achieving New Zealand's smokefree 2025 goal.**



RESULTS:

There was considerable survey and participant support for further smokefree areas, except from some businesses. There was strong survey support (75%) in a Wellington survey for moving to smokefree bylaws, rather than using the existing voluntary approach. Policy priorities that were found included secondhand smoke protection, protecting children, and the effective and positive communication of policies. The types of new outdoor places to be prioritised for new smokefree areas included: building entrances, transport waiting areas, areas with families, public seating and events.

Smokefree outdoor policies for some areas could be achieved through licence and lease conditions (eg, for café pavement area leases). Smokefree outdoor policies would require sufficient investment in the communication of the policy and its rationale, even if the policy was backed by law. Enforcement of smokefree outdoor bylaws would largely be by verbal information and warnings by officials.



METHODS:



Given these issues, we used a case study of New Zealand's capital city (Wellington), to explore the issues and options for progressing smokefree outdoor policies in pedestrian-dense urban outdoor public spaces. Official documents, 12 in-depth interviews, three small workshops and a day symposium were used to develop options.

CONCLUSIONS:

There appeared to be substantial scope for progressing smokefree outdoor policies in this case study city. Potential new policies included a smokefree downtown area, which could send a powerful message about the values and image of the city. The use of smokefree bylaws appears legally and practically feasible. Nevertheless, national smokefree outdoors legislation may be preferable for many types of areas.



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