

Government launches public consultation on tobacco control strategies for vibrant, healthy and tobacco-free Hong Kong (with photos/video)

The Health Bureau today (July 12) launched the Vibrant, Healthy and Tobacco-free Hong Kong public consultation on tobacco control strategies, inviting members of the public to express their views on the tobacco control work for the next phase. The consultation period will last until September 30.

The Secretary for Health, Professor Lo Chung-mau, said, "At present, nearly 600 000 people in Hong Kong are daily smokers, with one out of every two smokers aged 50 or above. Facing the double blow brought about by an ageing population and a rising number of chronic disease patients, the additional health risks posed by smoking will certainly put an extra burden on the healthcare system."

Professor Lo continued, "In addition, the actual number of female smokers is on the rise despite the general decreasing trend of smoking prevalence. Furthermore, over 7 per cent of secondary school students have been tempted to smoke. To protect our next generation from the hazard of smoking and ensure the sustainability of the healthcare system, it is imperative to formulate a tobacco control policy that keeps up with the times as early as possible to reduce the advertising effect and appeal of tobacco products, so as to prevent the public, young people in particular, from smoking out of curiosity. The Government has the imminent need and the urgency to take more effective tobacco control measures."

The Government has, in its Towards 2025: Strategy and Action Plan to Prevent and Control Non-communicable Diseases in Hong Kong, set a smoking prevalence target of 7.8 per cent by 2025 based on the recommendation of the World Health Organization (WHO), with a long-term goal of reaching an even lower smoking prevalence. Also, the country has implemented the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) since 2005, and its scope of application was extended to Hong Kong in 2006. Nonetheless, Hong Kong has yet to fully implement the duty and proven measures recommended by the FCTC.

Taking into account the recommendations of the WHO FCTC and the measures implemented or planned by various countries and regions, the Government has drawn up a consultation document (available at the thematic website www.tobacco-free.gov.hk) with the local situation considered. The document highlights four strategies and sets out relevant possible measures to seek public views on the next phase of tobacco control work. The four strategies

are:

- Regulate Supply, Suppress Demand;
- Ban Promotion, Reduce Attractiveness;
- Expand No Smoking Areas, Mitigate Harm; and
- Enhance Education, Support Cessation.

Professor Lo added, "Tobacco control relies on the support of the whole community. Through this public consultation exercise, the Government hopes to foster discussion on tobacco control strategies and the way forward for the whole society. For ourselves, our family members and our next generation, we sincerely invite all sectors of the community to voice their opinions and help the Government formulate detailed proposals for the next phase of tobacco control work in a bid to create a vibrant, healthy and tobacco-free Hong Kong."

Members of the public can make use of the online questionnaire available on the thematic website (www.tobacco-free.gov.hk) to express opinions on or before September 30. They may also submit their views by email to tobacco-free@healthbureau.gov.hk or by post to 18/F, East Wing, Central Government Offices, 2 Tim Mei Avenue, Tamar, Hong Kong (Please state "Submission of views for the consultation on tobacco control strategy").





控煙策略公眾諮詢網上問卷二維碼

QR code for the online questionnaire of the
Public Consultation on Tobacco Control Strategies