
ROYAL AUSTRALASIAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS

MEDIA RELEASE



Surgeons urge Government not to falter in fight against cigarettes

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The Royal Australasian College of Surgeons has thrown its support behind Senator Nick Xenophon's push for the introduction of a 'minimum floor price' for cigarettes.

College President, Professor Michael Grigg said the College would also be campaigning against any move to change or repeal the plain packaging laws for cigarettes.

"Government cannot take a backward step on the public health campaign against cigarettes," he said.

"Everything that can be done, must be done if it assists our attempts to help people stop smoking and to stop people from starting. Tobacco is an insidious drug and we cannot let our guard down for a moment."

Media reports said Senator Xenophon wanted to have a minimum floor price on cigarettes introduced in the wake of one cigarette manufacturer launching a \$13 25-pack on the market.

Professor Grigg said, "The Senator's plan to introduce a resolution in the upper house next week for a 'minimum floor price' for all cigarettes sold in Australia certainly has our support.

"Cigarette smoking is universally recognised as a major preventable cause of death and illness in Australasia and we have been very vocal in our support of campaigns and preventative measures designed to stem the use of tobacco."

He said one measure – plain packaging for cigarettes – has had its effectiveness questioned in the media recently by the major tobacco companies "that clearly have a vested interest".

Professor Grigg said, "The only way to see what works and what doesn't is to remove the politics and the bias and to have independent, scientific evaluation conducted on the measures being taken now, which in turn will guide the measures taken in the future."

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