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## **No Butts About It – Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Hospital is Completely Smoke-Free**

Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Hospital and Community Health Centres will go totally smoke free from November 30 2007. The move is a part of NSW Health's Smoke-Free Workplace Policy which outlines that staff members, patients and visitors wishing to smoke must now do so outside hospital grounds.

With over 20,000 Australians killed each year from smoking and an estimated cost of \$832 million in health care, Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Health Service (HKHS) has a responsibility to lead the community in lessening this toll.

One in two smokers will die from a smoking related illness and within three years lung cancer will surpass breast cancer as the single largest cause of cancer death in NSW women.

"As a health service we should be a health service and not support something that kills so many people," said Lisa Kenny, Registered Nurse from Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Hospital's Drug and Alcohol Unit.

"While the changes may be daunting for some, the health of staff, patients and visitors will benefit. We don't want asthmatic children exposed to clouds of tobacco smoke as they enter our hospital," continued Ms Kenny.

There is overwhelming evidence that passive smoking is harmful. Long-term effects of passive smoking include lung cancer, pneumonia and increased risk of lung damage. For children, there are increased respiratory illnesses such as bronchitis, pneumonia, slower lung growth, poorer lung function and coronary heart disease.

HKHS has a range of strategies available to help staff and patients who currently smoke including counselling and nicotine replacement therapy (NRT). Research shows that the use of NRT more than doubles the chance of not just quitting but 'staying stopped'.

"We have been introducing these changes over the last five years and this is the last phase and a positive step to making a healthy environment for our patients and staff. Many staff members and patients have taken up the challenge and successfully QUIT. Some have gone 'cold turkey' and others have used NRT and counselling; but all having done the hard yards, are glad they did," said Ms Kenny.

If you would like help to quit smoking, call the Quitline on 131 848. If you would like to quit smoking or refrain from smoking during a hospital stay, you can contact the Drug and Alcohol Unit of Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Hospital on phone 94779567.

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