

## MEDIA RELEASE

15 December, 2014

### Smoking banned at Toowoomba hospitals in the New Year

IN LINE with legislative requirements, smoking will be banned on the grounds of the Toowoomba Hospital, Baillie Henderson Hospital and Mt Lofty Heights Nursing Home from January 1, 2015.

Legislation was passed in Queensland Parliament last month requiring all private and public hospitals and health services across the state to go smoke free in the New Year.

The legislation also bans smoking within a five-metre boundary of the hospital or health service.

“People will no longer be able to smoke in the designated smoking areas from January 1 at any Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service (DDHHS) facility,” DDHHS Executive Director Medical Services Dr Hwee Sin Chong said.

“Patients admitted to hospital or residents of health facilities will be offered the use of free nicotine replacement therapies such as patches and gum.”

To further support patients or residents who have a nicotine dependency, staff members from across the DDHHS have undergone smoking cessation training.

“The training is provided internally and has provided staff with the most up-to-date information about smoking cessation and current, evidence-based ‘quit’ methods,” Dr Chong said.

Under the legislation, the smoking ban will be enforceable by security staff at the Toowoomba Hospital and Baillie Henderson Hospital who will be authorised to issue on-the-spot fines.

“However, our focus will be on informing people about the changes to the legislation and encouraging them to improve their health by quitting smoking,” Dr Chong said.

The ban also includes vaporisers commonly known as e-cigarettes. For more information about changes to the Tobacco and Other Smoking Product Act 1998 visit <http://www.health.qld.gov.au>

People interesting in quitting smoking are encouraged to speak to their GP or phone the Quit Line on 13 QUIT (13 78 48).

**Caption:** DDHHS Executive Director Medical Services Dr Hwee Sin Chong and Alcohol and Other Drugs clinical nurse Jenny Minchell are encouraging residents to consider quitting smoking ahead of the state-wide hospital smoking ban which comes into effect on January 1.

### Ends

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