

- Pub Health/Prog/Comm Safety
DD(A)



22 February 2012

Clr Keith Sullivan
Oberon Council
PO Box 84
Oberon NSW 2787

Heart Foundation
New South Wales
ABN 95 000 253 289

Level 3, 80 William Street
East Sydney NSW 2011

Telephone (02) 9219 2444
Facsimile (02) 9219 2424

www.heartfoundation.org.au

Dear Clr Sullivan

RE: NSW Government announces intent to introduce smoke-free outdoor legislation

You may be aware of the exciting news that the NSW Government has committed to making playgrounds, public sports grounds and swimming pools, public transport stops, within 4m of entrances to public buildings and from 2015, commercial outdoor dining areas smoke free.

This is an historic moment in our State's history and one that will help to protect the thousands of people in NSW who don't smoke. There is no safe level of exposure to second hand smoke – evidence shows that a non-smokers exposure to second-hand smoke can result in up to a 30% increase in risk of heart disease.

To date Oberon Council does not have policy that protects its community members from exposure to second-hand tobacco smoke however surveys indicate that there is strong community support for these measures. Recent Heart Foundation and Cancer Council surveys found that 94% of adults agree that playgrounds should be smoke free and 83% support smoke free outdoor dining.

The Heart Foundation has worked closely with the 94 Councils in NSW to put smoke free outdoor areas policies in place, and we are writing to urge you to not wait until 2015 to introduce a policy but to take action now.

NSW lags behind most other states and territories that already have this legislation in place, so why wait until 2015. There is very little that needs to be done in order to make outdoor dining areas smoke free, but the benefit to your community and your council's reputation in showing leadership on this issue is significant.

Contrary to tobacco industry scare tactics, state wide legislation is what eight out of ten** café and restaurant owners want, believing it is much fairer than leaving it to individual councils.

A survey of 450 NSW café and restaurant owners/managers found 82% think a smoking ban would create a much nicer environment for their customers. Pleasingly, of those surveyed, there were 122 businesses that are totally smoke-free and 91% reported that it is easy or very easy to enforce the restriction. This report is available on request.

Should you wish to discuss implementing a smoke free outdoor areas policy, please contact Andy Mark, Regional Health Promotion Coordinator on 02 4232 0130.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tony Thirlwell".

Tony Thirlwell OAM
Heart Foundation CEO