

## Media Release

**From:** Jill Stringer, Communications Advisor

**Date:** 26 May 2004

**Subject:** DHB goes smokefree on 31 May

Wairarapa DHB goes smokefree in all buildings grounds and vehicles on 31 May 2004.

"We see this as a really positive move for the DHB," says communications advisor Jill Stringer. "All other DHBs in the country have either gone smokefree already, or will do so before the end of the year. Many are, like us, choosing World Smokefree Day on May 31 to mark the change."

The 'smokefree project' has been several months in the planning. All staff were surveyed to find out how many were smokers, how many wanted to give up, and to test general attitudes to creating a smokefree environment, before a policy was finalised.

"We tended to fit the national picture of 17-25% of the workforce being current smokers," says Ms Stringer. "A big surprise was the large number of ex-smokers on staff. Clear trends were identified about the need for good signage, information for people coming in to hospital, and support for staff who want to quit smoking".

In preparation for World Smokefree day, signage is being put up around the hospital, and an advertising campaign is running in the newspaper and on radio. Brochures have been printed for patients and visitors, with advice about where to seek stop-smoking or smoking reduction advice.

"We are taking an educative approach to introducing a smokefree environment," says Ms Stringer. "It's important to remember that it's tobacco that is the problem, not the smoker."

Tracey Towns from Whaiora Whanui and Denise Allen from Choice Health visited the one remaining designated smoking area at Masterton Hospital last week (which disappeared on Monday), to distribute 'goody bags' containing quit smoking information and various smoke-free merchandise. Even some non-smoking staff and visitors just out enjoying the sunshine were given packs, and asked to pass them on to friends who smoke.

*1: Staff Members Fiona Brook and Cheryl Falloon (non-smokers!) each got a bonus 'smokefree' drink bottle, as part of the promotion*

*2: Jenny Martin, Daniel Sime, Helen Martin and Jolene Lambert all enjoyed getting smokefree packs*

*3: Daniel Sime, Helen Martin and Jolene Lambert are given smokefree packs by Tracey Towns, from Whaiora Whanui and Denise Allen from Choice Health.*



Picture 1



Picture 2



Picture 3