

MEDIA RELEASE

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Victorian health services receive international “GOLD” recognition for tobacco control

Alfred Health and Colac Area Health are among the few health services internationally to be awarded the coveted Gold Forum status by the Global Network of Tobacco-free Healthcare Services.

The annual award recognises high performance based on the eight Global Standards, which set out a systematic evidence based approach to tobacco control within healthcare services.

The path to GOLD is a rigorous one, with candidates undergoing independent local validation of their performance before being assessed by an international jury. Both services have been able to demonstrate:

- A systematic tobacco cessation program
- A systematic health promotion program
- A tobacco-free healthcare environment
- A tobacco-free culture among healthcare staff
- Systematic monitoring and evaluation
- Engagement in community tobacco-free activities at a local, regional and national level

“As the current Coordinating Centre for the Global Network of Tobacco-free Healthcare Services and the associated regional network, Barwon Health is proud to have accompanied Alfred Health and Colac Area Health on their journey,” said Dr Rudi Gasser, Barwon Health Occupational Physician and Board member of the Global Network.

“Both health services have been long standing members of the Victorian Network of Smokefree Healthcare Services (VNSHS) and have shown enormous commitment and persistence in this challenging area.”

Gold Forum membership carries with it an obligation to share and showcase experience and expertise through a variety of channels in order to support and motivate other health services in their tobacco control efforts. A key opportunity in this regard is the annual Gold Forum event at which Alfred Health and Colac Area Health will present at in April 2017.

“Health services worldwide play a vital role in proactively addressing the tobacco epidemic in order to protect population health,” said Alfred Health Smoking Cessation Specialist Emma Dean.

“The process of audit and validation against the standards has been instrumental in our ongoing improvement in the care we deliver for people who smoke.”

Colac Area Health’s Health Promotion Coordinator Erin McClusky explained that health services have a responsibility to prevent tobacco related diseases in the community and reduce the burden of tobacco on the population.

“The audit and validation process has been invaluable in highlighting areas that need to be strengthened and improved and provides us with an opportunity to learn from other health services

about what more we can do. It has also affirmed that the tobacco interventions put in place are best practice interventions,” said Erin.

Thirty Victorian health services are now members of VNSHS, which also links closely with Quit Victoria and the Tobacco Control Unit at the Department of Health and Human Services.

“It is our hope that we can expand membership to the Network and that more of our members will participate in the Gold Forum process in the coming year,” said Dr Gasser.

“All health services can benefit by applying the self-audit tool to gain an understanding of what actions they need to implement to progress their smokefree efforts for their service.”

More information about the GOLD Forum event can be found via the VNSHS website www.smokefreevictoria.com.au

For further information, email the Coordinating Centre: smokefreevictoria@projecthealth.com.au

The VNSHS is proudly supported by Barwon Health and Project Health.

[The Global Network Standards](#)

Standard 1 Governance & commitment	Standard 2 Communication	Standard 3 Education & training	Standard 4 Identification, diagnosis & tobacco cessation support
Standard 5 Tobacco-free environment	Standard 6 Healthy workplace	Standard 7 Community engagement	Standard 8 Monitoring & evaluation

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