

MEDIA RELEASE

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Quitting smoking could be best Christmas present

Smokers can give themselves and their families the best Christmas present by kicking the habit, says the Pharmacy Guild of New Zealand.

In a Christmas message to smokers, Guild President, Karen Crisp, says community pharmacists are a great source of advice and support for anyone considering giving up smoking.

Many community pharmacies offer stop smoking services and can provide nicotine replacement therapy alongside advice and support for those wishing to quit. Smoking cessation services involve a consultation with the pharmacist who can create a programme to improve a smoker's chances of giving up.

Ms Crisp says the summer time is an excellent opportunity to promote the advantages of a healthy lifestyle because most people are on holiday and spending a lot of time outdoors in fine weather.

"Giving up smoking would be a gift that goes on giving. If you are a smoker, giving up the habit could be the one Christmas and New Year resolution that your family and friends would most thank you for," Ms Crisp said.

She says pharmacists feel strongly about the anti-smoking message because they see the effects of smoking every day as they work with patients who have smoking related conditions. Smoking puts others at risk, not just the smoker, and puts an avoidable cost on household budgets and the health system.

"As pharmacists, we all work hard to emphasise the benefits of healthy living and to provide the best possible advice on keeping healthy."

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Notes:

- The Pharmacy Guild of New Zealand (Inc) is a national membership organisation representing community pharmacy owners. We provide leadership on all issues affecting the sector and we advocate for the business interests of community pharmacy.
- For additional information on the Guild and community pharmacy, please go to www.pgnz.org.nz.