

WORLD NO TOBACCO DAY

Mr BROCK (Frome) (10:54): I also rise to speak to the motion put forward by the member for Kaurua. Every year on 31 May, the World Health Organisation and partners mark World No Tobacco Day, highlighting the health and other risks associated with tobacco use and advocating for effective policies to reduce tobacco consumption.

World No Tobacco Day 2018 will focus on the impact tobacco has on the cardiovascular health of people worldwide. It will highlight the links between the use of tobacco products and heart and other cardiovascular diseases, increase awareness within the broader public of the impact tobacco use and exposure to second-hand smoke has on these health issues, and provide opportunities for the public, governments and others to make commitments to promote heart health by protecting people from the use of tobacco products.

Tobacco use is an important risk factor in the development of coronary heart disease and strokes as well as cardiovascular disease (CVD). Despite the known harms of tobacco to heart health and the availability of solutions to reduce related death and disease, knowledge among large sections of the public that tobacco is one of the leading causes of CVD is very low. Tobacco use is one of the largest causes of preventable, non-communicable diseases including cancers, heart and lung disease

The legislation of plain packaging for tobacco products entails restricting or prohibiting the use of logos, colours, brand images or any other promotional information other than brand and product names displayed in a standard colour and font, thus preventing the display and temptation to people and making it more difficult to tempt people to take up smoking. Previously, the packaging of various brands of tobacco was one of the main reasons that many people started to take up smoking. This was seen a long time ago in commercials in cinemas, etc., especially commercials like the 'Marlborough Man' advertisements, which made it look as though this was the great new thing to do.

Tobacco also diverts valuable household income. It has been proven that plain packaging reduces the attractiveness of tobacco products, restricts tobacco advertising and promotion, limits misleading labelling and increases the effectiveness of health warnings. I have known many people who actually spend more money on tobacco and cigarettes than they do on feeding their own children. Over and over again we have seen how industry, fuelled by its deep pockets, has been able to develop new strategies in an attempt to protect profits generated from its deadly products. In the case of plain packaging, that has been the target of a massive tobacco industry misinformation campaign dating as far back as 1993.

CVD kills more people than any other cause of death worldwide, and tobacco use and second-hand smoke exposure contribute to approximately 12 per cent of all heart disease deaths. Tobacco use is the second leading cause of CVD after high blood pressure. The global tobacco epidemic kills more than seven million people each year, of which close to 900,000 are nonsmokers who are dying from breathing second-hand smoke. Nearly 80 per cent of the more than one billion smokers worldwide live in low and middle-income countries, where the burden of tobacco-related illness and death is heaviest.

In 2014, lung cancer was the leading cause of cancer deaths in Australia, and it is estimated that it will remain the most common cause of death from cancer in 2018. In 2014, the age-standardised mortality rate was 31 deaths per 100,000 people (40 for males and 23 for females). The mortality rate of lung cancer will generally increase with age for both males and females. In 2017, it is estimated that the risk of an individual dying from lung cancer by their 85th birthday will be one in 23 (one in 18 males and one in 29 females).

The number of deaths from lung cancer increased from 2,883 in 1968 to 8,251 in 2014. Over the same period the age standardisation mortality rate increased from 32 deaths per 100,000 in 1968 to a high of 43 per 100,000 in 1989, before decreasing to 31 deaths per 100,000 in 2014. The decrease in mortality largely has been seen in males, while age standardisation rates for lung cancer in females has been lower than in most males. The age standardisation has increased in females to 23 per 100,000.

From a personal point of view, my first exposure to smoking was in my early days. Both my parents were smokers, my dad being a heavier smoker than my mother. However, I can vividly remember travelling in our car with both parents smoking. Bear in mind that in those days there were no air conditioners in cars and the windows were always up. At that point, because of the movies, etc., and the portrayal of men smoking, it appeared to me that this was the thing to do. How wrong I was.

My first attempt at having a smoke was at the local football game while I was working on the scoreboard. I was 14 years of age and my mates lit up an Alpine cigarette, which was in a green packet. They beckoned me to have a puff with them, saying how great it was. Well, I coughed, spluttered, turned green and looked similar to the Alpine packet, and that was my last attempt at smoking.

As my dad got older his lungs were deteriorating, and he was then getting emphysema and at times had to have an oxygen bottle for breathing. When he was told of the damage that had been caused to his lungs over the many years, and was finally accepting the truth, he was advised to give up smoking. However, my dad being very stubborn, asked, 'Will it make any difference to me?' and when the doctor answered, 'No it won't,' he then stated, 'Well, I may as well have some sort of enjoyment until my dying days.'

This was very traumatic because seeing my dad go through that, and seeing other people's loss of lifestyle, etc., and the impact on the family, is just one of those things I will never forget. Whilst there may have been some enjoyment for him, it certainly was not enjoyable for his family to watch him, especially his grandchildren. I strongly urge people to look at the facts and the dramatic photos of the lung cancers and the affected lungs affected and give it up. I commend this motion to the house