

# TAG calls for public support for Tobacco Bill

Internationally, World No Tobacco Day is commemorated on 31 May 2018, and this year in the run-up to the day, the TAG Tobacco, Alcohol and Gambling Advisory, Advocacy and Action Group encourages South Africans to support the proposed Control of Tobacco Products and Electronic Delivery Systems Bill, as there are areas that need improving and strengthening.



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“In 1989, Edenvale Town Council, where I had served as mayor, successfully banned smoking in all municipal buildings. It was easy and was well accepted. It was a landmark decision, good law and set the scene for tobacco control in South Africa,” says TAG CEO, Peter Ucko. “It was another 12 years before smoking was partially banned nationally in all public places. It is about to be totally banned indoors by the Bill.

“In an emulation of the Edenvale action, the Mayor of Tshwane, Solly Msimanga, announced in March 2018, that Tshwane would ban all smoking in their buildings. This is an excellent move, yet to be fully implemented. The TAG board of directors challenges all cities and towns in South Africa to take that step now. There is no reason to wait for the Bill to become law. Do it now. Ban smoking in all your buildings. Protect your customers and your staff.

“There will be a meeting of mayors from African cities next month in South Africa and the Mayor of Tshwane has agreed to take this challenge to the mayors of all African cities and urge them all to become smoke free cities.”

## Smoking breaks hearts

The [effects of tobacco and smoking](#) on the heart are well known. Specialist physician cardiologist and deputy chairman of TAG, Dr Jeff King says, “Smoking is the most common independent major risk factor for arterial disease, including coronary arteries and the brain. Women are at greater risk of myocardial infarction by six times that of non-smokers and men at 3 times. If you don’t stop smoking after a cardiac event, you are at an increased risk of recurrent sinister events which will either kill you or severely impair the quality of your life.”

In 2004, the Interheart Study found that of the nine major risk factors, smoking accounted for 36%. Other risk factors include cholesterol, obesity, alcohol and poor diet. Obesity coupled with smoking increases the risk and size of cardiac related pathology.

King adds, "The consequence of heart muscle damage is heart failure. Such a diagnosis is worse than a diagnosis of cancer in terms of quality of life."

Smoking does not break only your heart but also the hearts of your family, children and those around you. Your smoking can cause them to suffer disease, disability and death. 10% of smoking-related deaths are from tobacco smoke pollution (second-hand smoke).

The reality is that smoking affects every part of the body, causes or aggravates many diseases and cancers. Smoking causes disease, disability and death. Tobacco products and smoking kill about half of all smokers. Cigarettes are unique in that they are the only consumer product which, when used as directed by the manufacturer, will kill about half of its users.

The tobacco manufacturers knowingly manufacture and sell a product that kills about half of its users. The manufacturers and importers know that their products kill people. TAG believes that this could be a criminal action and will pursue this through our criminal justice system. Those responsible for killing people through the products that they manufacture and sell should be held liable.

For more information on the proposed Tobacco Bill, go to <https://pmg.org.za/bill/787/>.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>