



## **Media Release**

**Monday 30 May 2011**

### **Gender specific approaches needed to tackle women's smoking**

On World No Tobacco Day on 31 May, Women's Health Victoria is calling for a more targeted approach to address smoking in women and girls.

Executive Director of Women's Health Victoria, Ms Rita Butera, said research on women and tobacco shows that women and men tend to smoke for different reasons. "Women often start smoking in their teens due to peer pressure. Then, when wanting to quit, women are held back by issues such as fear of weight gain and social exclusion and not having alternative ways to relieve stress.

"For decades, the tobacco industry has invested in research specific to various groups of women. The industry uses the results of this research to develop women-specific marketing campaigns which have proven to be very successful.

"Plain packaging is one way of denying the tobacco industry this targeted marketing. Fierce opposition from the industry is testimony of its potential to curb smoking.

"WHV fully supports the introduction of plain packaging for cigarettes. We also know that more can be done to support research, prevention and cessation strategies that are specific to women and girls.

"We need to work smarter. If we want to reduce the number of women and girls smoking, we need to use the same targeted approach that the tobacco industry does to get them hooked in the first place."

For more information, please refer to Women's Health Victoria's Gender Impact Assessment on Women and Tobacco, which is available at: <http://whv.org.au/publications-resources/publications-resources-by-topic/post/women-and-tobacco-gia/>

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