



STATEMENT

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Ministry of Health

Health Minister's statement on National Non-Smoking Week

VICTORIA – Minister of Health Margaret MacDiarmid has issued the following statement in recognition of National Non-Smoking Week from Jan. 20 to 26, Weedless Wednesday on Jan. 23 and to acknowledge the B.C. Smoking Cessation Program:

“Smoking increases many health risks, including lung cancer, throat and oral cancer, heart disease, stroke and emphysema. For long-term smokers, it’s never a bad time to quit. Through the Smoking Cessation Program, hundreds of thousands of British Columbians are taking active steps towards making a healthy choice for themselves and their families. Quitting smoking and reducing exposure to second-hand smoke greatly improves both quality of life and lifespan.

“Established in 1977, National Non-Smoking Week seeks to help people quit smoking and to prevent people who do not smoke from beginning and becoming addicted to tobacco.

“Tobacco use is the single most preventable cause of disease and death in British Columbia. While B.C. has the lowest smoking rate in Canada at 14.2 per cent, there are still approximately 550,000 British Columbians who smoke. An estimated 70 per cent of smokers in B.C. want to quit.

“Quitting smoking can be the best thing you can do for your health as it will reduce health risks like cancer, heart disease and asthma. There are a range of supports in place through our Smoking Cessation Program, and accessing them can be as simple as calling HealthLink BC at 8-1-1.

“During National Non-Smoking Week, I encourage all British Columbians to take advantage of the Smoking Cessation Program and to consider quitting for their health and the health of their families.”

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