



OVER HALF OF AUSTRALIANS SUPPORT ENDING RETAIL SALES OF CIGARETTES WITHIN 10 YEARS

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SUPPORT for phasing out the sale of cigarettes is common among Victorian adults, according to a study published today by the *Medical Journal of Australia*.

Almost two-thirds think the retail sale of cigarettes should be phased out within 10 years.

Dr Emily Brennan, Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for Behavioural Research in Cancer at Cancer Council Victoria, and colleagues asked 2774 adults two questions:

1. Some people believe that there may come a time when it will no longer be legal to sell cigarettes in retail outlets in Australia. Do you think this would be (a) a good thing, (b) a bad thing, (c) neither a good thing or a bad thing; or (d) don't know/can't say;
2. What timeframe do you think is fair in relation to the proposed phasing out of the sale of cigarettes from retail outlets? Would you say (a) within the next 5 years, (b) within the next 10 years, (c) within the next 20 years, (d) yes, but not within the next 20 years, (e) no, not ever.

"A total of 1466 respondents (52.8%) – including 145 of 457 current smokers (31.7%), 367 of 682 adults under 30 years of age (53.8%) and 599 of 1122 adults aged 50 or more (53.4%) – thought it would be good were selling cigarettes in retail outlets phased out; 533 (19.2%), including 181 smokers (39.6%), thought it would be bad. A total of 1779 respondents (64.2%) thought it fair to implement the phase-out within the next ten years," Brennan and colleagues reported.

"Support in 2009 was higher (72%)," they wrote.

"A major tobacco control media campaign, new graphic health warnings, and new smoke-free laws may have increased awareness of tobacco control in 2009, and the phrasing of the question (2009: "will no longer be available", 2019: "it will no longer be legal" to sell cigarettes) may also have influenced the willingness of respondents to approve the goal.

"Phasing out retail tobacco sales would be favourably received by most Australians," Brennan and colleagues concluded.

"Effective messages for bolstering support, especially among smokers and tobacco retailers, would be required. Policy pathways for successfully implementing a phase-out also require investigation."

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