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23 June 2015

Dear Sir/Madam,

Comment from the Hong Kong Neurological Society on government's proposal on "Strengthen tobacco control measures" (to be submitted to Legislative Council via Hong Kong Council on Smoking and Health (COSH))

We are writing to express our full support on the efforts of the government to further strengthen tobacco control measures. As far as the brain health of our community is concerned, we would like to draw your attention on 2 major brain disorders associated with smoking, namely stroke and dementia.

A. Smoking and stroke

- 1 Smoking increases the risk of stroke (both ischemic and haemorrhagic strokes).
 - 1.1 The risk of ischemic stroke among current smokers is 3 to 4 times that of lifelong non -smokers or subjects who have quit smoking for more than 10 years.
 - 1.2 The risk of intracerebral haemorrhage (ICH) and subarachnoid haemorrhage (SAH) among current smokers is 2 times and 4 times that of lifelong non - smokers respectively.
- 2 Second hand smoking
 - 2.1 The risk of ischemic strokes among female smokers with smoking spouses is at least 2 times that of those with non - smoking spouses.
- 3 Dose-response relationship between smoking and risk of stroke
 - 3.1 The relative risk of ischemic stroke is 2.2 among smokers who smoke 1 to 10 cigarettes per day and rises to 4.2 among those who smoke 21 to 30 cigarettes per day.
- 4 Smoking cessation and reduction in risk of stroke
 - 4.1 At 5 years after smoking cessation, the risk of ischemic stroke is half that of current smokers.

B. Smoking and dementia

- 1 The relative risk of Alzheimer's disease and vascular dementia is 2 times among those who smoke 2 or more packs of cigarettes per day compared with subjects who smoke less than half a pack per day.

The increased number of years of life expectancy among men and women should smoking be banned in the United States was estimated to be 13.2 and 14.5 based on population - based studies.

In addition to the measures proposed by the COSH, the feasibility of prohibiting smoking in pedestrian only streets may be worth exploring.

Yours faithfully,
Council of the Hong Kong Neurological Society (2015-16)