

Case study: Tararua

1.1 Background

Tararua Council launched its smokefree parks and playgrounds policy in September 2008. The smokefree project was initiated by Tobacco Free Central – a smokefree coalition made up of local PHOs, The Cancer Society, The National Heart Foundation, Māori Health Providers and others.

1.2 Implementation

A sub group of Tobacco Free Central was formed to deal with smokefree outdoor spaces. Before officially approaching the Council it was seen as important to involve local iwi. A hui was held with the CEO of Rangitane O Tamaki Nui A Rua to come on board and the iwi's support was received.

1.2.1 Approach to council

The initial approach was made to the Parks Manager to assess how receptive the Council would be to the proposal. The response was positive and an oral submission on smokefree parks and playgrounds was then made to the Council. As part of the submission, Tobacco Free Central demonstrated how similar initiatives around the country had worked and assured the Council that it would cover any costs incurred, as they were aware of the small community with little funding.

1.2.2 Initial responses

The response from Tararua Council was supportive. At first the Council agreed only to a trial to erect signs in four key areas. This was launched at Whanau Ora Day, 31 January. Shortly after this, Council staff decided to develop a policy that included all Council owned parks and playgrounds.

1.2.3 Policy development

The official smokefree parks and playgrounds policy was developed after the signage launch. Council staff members saw the idea was valuable and were impressed with the resources the coalition offered, which included a draft policy should it be needed.

The final policy was developed largely independently of Tobacco Free Central, and the council undertook its own research to complement that provided by the coalition. The Council felt an important aspect of the policy was that it should be educative and encouraging rather than legislative and enforcing.

1.2.4 Policy adoption

The official Council policy was adopted on 16 September at a full council meeting, making all Council owned parks and playgrounds smokefree.

1.2.5 Budget

Each sign cost around \$60-70, and these expenses were covered by members of Tobacco Free Central. Tararua Council paid for the signs' installation.

1.2.6 Promotion and media coverage

Local media were informed about the launch of the signage and invited to attend. The launch was covered by local newspapers and by Tararua Television. A media release was also sent out by the Council when it implemented the official policy. The launch was covered by local newspapers.

1.3 Evaluation

In order to evaluate attitudes within the community, surveys were conducted prior to the launch of smokefree parks and playgrounds. A post-launch survey is also scheduled to take place. Results will be reported back to Tararua Council.

1.3.1 What worked well

Essential to the success of the project was building relationships and gaining Māori support from the outset. The Rangitane O Tamaki Nui A Rua logo was displayed on smokefree signage along with those of the DHB and Auahi Kore. This allowed the community to see it was a collaborative initiative.

Tararua Council staff observed that Tobacco Free Central was well coordinated and provided a seamless process that made the issue easy for them to understand and work with.

1.3.2 What didn't work so well

Some coalition members felt that if they had had more time to launch the project, it could have been better-promoted and gained more media coverage.

1.4 Suggestions

The following suggestions come from members of Tobacco Free Central and Tararua Council staff:

- Relationships are key. Work with all elements of the community inclusive of iwi. Find the right people who have relationships with the iwi already because

they're the ones who have to support the project, not just those people who want to give up smoking.

- Make sure you do your research on your local council and how it works, and that you're well prepared. Talk to the right people from the outset. There are many different structures to councils and sometimes, even with the best of intentions, nothing will get done if you approach the wrong people.