



Group backs anti-smoking push

By SAM POTTS

The Cancer Council NSW has launched a new campaign after a report found that it is easier to find somewhere to buy cigarettes than to find somewhere to buy prescription medications.

Their research revealed that in NSW there are five times as many places selling cigarettes as there are pharmacies.

Community Programs Coordinator for Cancer Council Western NSW, Kate Maloney, said "We need to look at new ways to help smokers who are trying to quit and to stop young people taking up smoking.

"Tobacco claims the lives of more than 15,000 Australians each year and more than 800,000 people in NSW continue to smoke."

The Cancer Council is calling on the state Government to

examine options to reduce the availability of tobacco and ensure it is sold responsibly, and to help those who are trying to quit and to help prevent children becoming smokers in the future.

"Options could include restricting the sale of cigarettes near schools, or requiring all businesses that sell cigarettes to also sell quitting aids, like patches and gum," Ms Maloney said.

"In a recent Cancer Council NSW community-based survey of 2473 people, 79 per cent of respondents supported policies requiring retailers to have a licence to sell tobacco products, in the same way that retailers need a licence to sell alcohol.

"Those are higher levels of support than for point-of-sale display bans and plain packag-

ing, which are already in place."

The Mudgee Relay for Life committee pledged their support for Cancer Council's Harmful not Helpful campaign during their recent meeting.

They encourage the Mudgee community to join the "Harmful not Helpful" photo challenge by getting 10 friends or family members photographed with a sign asking for action to reduce the temptation of tobacco.

The target is 9597 photos - one for every retail outlet across NSW - to highlight the need for action.

For more information or to pledge support visit the Cancer Council NSW Can Act website www.canact.com.au

Should retailers be required to have a licence to sell tobacco? Have your say in our poll: Page 8



Members of the 2014 Mudgee and District Relay For Life organising committee pledge their support for the Cancer Council's 'Harmful Not Helpful' campaign. Pictured are (back, from left) Mel Heldon, Kellea Rayner, Maureen Bennett, Mark Sabin, Ian Hunter, (middle from left) Trey Smith, Gemma Toole, Hayley Gray, Gabrielle Condon, Rebecca Stoddart, (front, from left) Heidi Stott, Debbie Degoumois, Kris Morrison, Tanya McPherson, Hayley Gray, and Rebecca Redfern.