



Senator Marielle Smith
Chair, Legislation Committee
Standing Committee on Community Affairs
Via email: Community.Affairs.Sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Senator Smith,

Re: Questions on notice

Thank you for the opportunity to take questions on notice and provide further detail to the Committee to assist with deliberations. As our organisations appeared together and the questions on notice are applicable to all our organisations, we are submitting a single combined response for the Committee's consideration, in addition to feedback provided by Lung Foundation Australia on Friday 3 May 2024.

QON taken during our appearance from Senator Jordon Steele John: *Any ways in which you think services like Quitline may need to be adapted or funded differently to effectively reach and support this much younger cohort?*

QON received following the Hearings from Senator Louise Pratt: *Would you support a referral pathway to doctors and school nurses for children and young people who are vaping, or have a suggestion for an alternative mechanism?*

Quitting leads to long-term physical health, mental health and financial benefits. Implementing cessation support at system and population levels complements and synergises with other population-level measures.

Quitline is currently operated by different providers in different jurisdictions – Cancer Council Tasmania, Cancer Council Victoria, Cancer Institute NSW, and Queensland Health. While all Quitlines work to national standards, they are not uniformly delivered, and have varied service offerings according to their local communities, circumstances and funding.

We are in strong agreement that there should be nationally consistent delivery of Quitline services specifically tailored to the needs of young people, and that young people are able to engage with Quitline via the modality that best suits their needs. A contemporary, fit-for-purpose Quitline service should deliver broad digital accessibility, youth behavioural supports, culturally sensitive programs and ongoing follow-up. It should be underpinned by a targeted youth marketing and education strategy can effectively reach and engage young people in Quitline services.

However not all young people will engage with Quitlines, with the need to build additional cessation support into existing services engaging with young people and digital offerings.

Many young people do engage with Health and NGO community services that are provided by, or under the terms of contracts with, the Australian Government and state and territory governments. Current delivery of cessation support in both health and NGO sectors is fragmented and under-resourced. We recommend specifying the provision of cessation support as contractual requirements between Government funders and health/NGO sector funding recipients.

Cancer Council NSW are currently working with nib foundation in a 3 year project aimed to scope, pilot, develop and evaluate a tailored, online vaping cessation service/platform for young people aged 14-24 years of age. The multichannel user-centred platform will be an Australian-first with the potential to support population-level changes in reversing trends in uptake and reduce use of tobacco and vaping products by young people in Australia. The scoping phase is currently underway which has included environmental scans (drawing on the wealth of cessation data available as a part of the Generation Vape Project as well as other published and grey literature) and stakeholder mapping across the sector to ensure that there is a comprehensive suite of support for all young people across Australia.

Additionally, we recommend that relevant professionals and organisations who engage with young people (such as school nurses and counsellors, youth workers, community health and development organisations, etc) are able to gain the necessary skills, experience and knowledge to provide cessation support. This requires a nationally standardised approach including developing and implementing comprehensive and integrated guidelines; standards for professional training, resources and cessation advice; centralised monitoring and evaluation to ensure consistency and quality.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Tanya Buchanan
Chief Executive Officer
Cancer Council Australia

Professor Garry Jennings
Chief Medical Advisor
Heart Foundation

Mark Brooke
Chief Executive Officer
Lung Foundation Australia