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MEDIA RELEASE

QUIT SA TO HELP PORT AUGUSTA KICK THE HABIT

The Flinders and Far North Division of General Practice are calling for a smoke-free Port Augusta, and have enlisted the help of Quit SA to help the community to quit.

Quit SA staff will be visiting Port Augusta from 23 -27 February and working closely with health workers, community workers and smokers to help reduce the smoking rate in the area.

Smoking causes cancer, heart disease, respiratory diseases and stroke, and claims thousands of South Australian lives each year.

Manager of Quit SA, David Edwards, said that Quit SA staff will be meeting individually with almost every GP in Port Augusta, providing education on supporting patients who are planning to quit smoking.

"GPs will be updated on smoking addiction and strategies smokers can follow to successfully quit," he said.

Quit SA staff will also be working with midwives at the Port Augusta hospital and staff at the Pika Wiya Health Service, who can pass the quit smoking message to pregnant women and their families.

Around 53% per cent of the South Australian Aboriginal population are smokers. Quit SA staff will be providing training to assist health workers in tackling smoking within Aboriginal communities.

Port Augusta residents will have the opportunity to speak directly to Quit SA staff, on Tuesday 24 February, from 1.30pm – 4.30pm at the Plaza.

"Quit SA staff will be available to provide information, support and advice directly to smokers during their visit. However, support is always just a phone call away through the Quitline (13 7848), for just the cost of a local call," said Mr Edwards.

Medical Director of the Flinders and Far North Division of General Practice, Dr Manoj George, said "we're committed to reducing the smoking rate in Port Augusta and hope that one day, Port Augusta will be smoke-free.

"Smoking is one of the leading causes of preventable death and disease worldwide and Port Augusta's GPs will be ready to provide support and advice to anybody who is considering quitting," he said.

Media contact: Jessica Playford on 0400 855 244

For more information on Quit SA call the Quitline on 13 7848.

Notes to editors:

To arrange an interview with Medical Director of the Flinders and Far North Division of General Practice, Dr Manoj George, call 8641 1055.