

Media Release 24th May 2007

**Smoking Doubles your Risk of Stroke
Make World No Tobacco Day May 31st your day to Quit!**

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A new media campaign highlighting smokers 'high risk of stroke' begins this week. The creative approach for the 'Stroke' campaign is confronting emotionally, showing life after the disease. The idea being communicated is that stroke doesn't always kill but can result in reduced quality of life for you and your family.

Focus testing found the concepts used in the campaign, confronted smokers with the fear of being trapped inside their own body as a result of smoking-related stroke and the impact this has on their families. The imagery resonated strongly with smokers and tapped into the concern that their smoking would affect their loved ones.

"Smoking doesn't just kill – it shatters the lives of individuals and their families. Smokers face double the risk of having a stroke than non-smokers. This can leave victims severely disabled and unable to communicate." said Geoff Halsey, CEO Heart Foundation SA.

A stroke occurs when a blood vessel that supplies blood to the brain suddenly becomes blocked or bleeds. This results in part of the brain dying and causes loss of function of that part of the brain. A stroke may lead to death or affect functions such as movement of body parts, vision, swallowing and communication.

David Edwards, Manager of Quit SA said, "As this campaign shows, stroke isn't just a problem for long-term smokers but for some as young as in their thirties. Many don't realise their smoking can cause years of disability before an early death. Smoking is a major health risk. The first step in reducing the risk of cancer, stroke, heart disease and many other debilitating conditions is to quit." "Smokers who need help and advice to kick the habit should call the Quitline on 13 7848" he said.

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