

# University Smoke-Free Policies in Australia: Lessons for Indonesia

Mentari WIDIASTUTI<sup>a</sup>, Coral GARTNER<sup>b</sup>, Sheleigh LAWLER<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Center of Health Behaviour and Promotion, Faculty of Medicine, Public Health, and Nursing, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia

<sup>b</sup>School of Public Health, Faculty of Medicine, The University of Queensland Australia

## BACKGROUND

Eliminating exposure to second-hand smoke is among the best practices to control noncommunicable diseases.<sup>1</sup> Indonesia has been dealing with growing burdens of noncommunicable disease due to its high and persistent tobacco smoking prevalence.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, Australia shows an impressive progress in altering its national tobacco epidemic through the establishment of smoke-free policies.<sup>3</sup> Recently, many universities in Australia have implemented smoke-free policies<sup>4</sup>, providing a good example of tobacco control through educational settings.

## AIMS

- To compare evidence of university smoke-free policies in Australia and Indonesia
- To provide suggestions for an effective adoption of smoke-free policies in Indonesian universities.

## METHODS

Findings from an unpublished preliminary cross-sectional study on 100% smoke-free policies at The University of Queensland, Australia involving staff (N=677) and students (N=5172)<sup>5</sup> were synthesized with published literature on smoke-free policies at other Australian universities and higher education institutions. Other relevant information regarding campus smoke-free policies was further obtained from official university websites. As for the evidence of university smoke-free policies in Indonesia, an online search was conducted on Google, Google Scholar, and PubMed.

## FINDINGS



**Figure 1. Summary of evidence from Australia and Indonesia included in the review**

## UNIVERSITY SMOKE-FREE POLICIES IN AUSTRALIA

- Most Australian universities have implemented smoke-free policies to various degrees.<sup>6</sup>
- Aim: to promote wellness and protect from second-hand smoke exposure
- Research is integral to policy development and implementation.
- Various channels are used to communicate the policies and to increase awareness (e.g. university websites and visible signs in prominent places).
- Some universities integrate smoking cessation services in their campus clinics.
- Policies are enforced by security staff mostly through verbal warnings.

## ARE THE POLICIES EFFECTIVE?

- Australian university students and staff generally supported campus smoke-free policies
- Support outdoor smoking bans were less strong.
- One study comparing pre- and post-policy implementation indicated an increase in support towards 100% smoke-free policies and awareness of campus smoke-free policies.<sup>7</sup>
- Although the study reported a marginal decrease in smoking prevalence (from 9.3% to 8.4%), there was a significant decrease in reported secondhand smoke exposure before and after policy implementation (79.4% and 58.1%, respectively).<sup>7</sup>

## WHAT ABOUT INDONESIA?

- Whether research is integrated into development process remains questionable
- Some universities have declared to be smoke-free, but the implementation varies among their faculties
- Enforcement is challenging because of limited resources and support
- There is a lack of special agencies to communicate, implement, and enforce smoke-free policies in universities

## LESSONS LEARNT

Collaborative efforts are the key to a successful adoption of campus smoke-free universities in Indonesia. Indonesian universities should establish a certain agency or initiative to successfully adopt campus smoke-free policies by involving university stakeholders, researchers, staff, and students.

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