



MEDIA RELEASE

UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO, WELLINGTON | Tel 03 479 5452 | 03 479 5016 | 03 479 8263

Tuesday 23 April 2015

Smokefree signage lacking in schools

Smokefree signage, which is required by law, is absent from many North Island schools, according to University of Otago research.

The pilot study of 50 lower North Island primary and secondary schools found that a third had no smokefree signage. Of the schools that did have signage, only half had a smokefree sign at their main entrance.

The research, which is the first in New Zealand to look at the usage of smokefree signage in schools, was published today in the *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health*.

Under the 2004 Smoke-free Environments Act, all preschools, primary and secondary schools are required to have smokefree signage ‘prominently displayed’ at every entrance to a school property, as well as at building entrances.

Associate Professor George Thomson says from a health perspective it’s disappointing that a third of all schools surveyed had no smokefree signage visible from the perimeter and that most did not have signs at a main entrance.

“It’s important that schools have smokefree signage, particularly at entrances where parents and caregivers may be waiting, because they are a good reminder.”

The study, by researchers from the Public Health Department at the University’s Wellington campus, used Google Street View to locate larger smokefree signage as well as on-location observations.

For further information contact:

Associate Professor George Thomson
Department of Public Health
University of Otago, Wellington
Email: george.thomson@otago.ac.nz
Phone: 04 918 6054 or 027 819 3603
www.otago.ac.nz/wellington

For a list of Otago experts available for media comment, please go to:
www.otago.ac.nz/mediaexpertise

Editor notes

A copy of the research publication is available from Dr Thomson.

