

# MEDIA ALERT

## National Health Body Presents 'Deadly' Global Award

**When: (tomorrow)** from 11am – World No Tobacco Day: Tuesday, 31<sup>st</sup> May

**Where:** ATSICHS Brisbane Woolloongabba clinic - 55 Annerley Road, Woolloongabba QLD

**Who:** State of Origin legends and Deadly Choices Ambassadors Steve Renouf, Willie Tonga, Tamika Upton and Tallisha Harden. National Coordinator 'Tackling Indigenous Smoking Program, Professor Tom Calma AO, IUIH CEO Adrian Carson, ATSICHS Brisbane CEO Renee Blackman.

**Media Interview Opportunities:** As above.

### Background:

Marking World No Tobacco Day 2022, Australia's National Coordinator of the Tackling Indigenous Smoking (TIS) Program, Professor Tom Calma AO will be in Brisbane tomorrow, to officially recognise Deadly Choices as a recipient of a World Health Organisation (WHO) award, following various COVID-related presentation postponements in the past 12 months.

Representatives of the Institute for Urban Indigenous Health's (IUIH) Deadly Choices preventative health arm will be on hand to accept the honour, which acknowledges efforts in promoting the dangers of smoking among Indigenous communities during a six-hour Facebook 'Live' activity broadcast on May 21, 2020 for World No Tobacco Day.

"I would like to congratulate Deadly Choices for their WHO award which has recognised the program as the exemplar of how people should be going about tobacco control. Deadly Choices has won the global award for helping Mob from right across Australia give up smoking," confirmed Professor Calma.

"The core work of Deadly Choices focuses on ensuring smoke-free homes and cars through health and education programs like the 'Deadly Places – Smoke Free Spaces' initiative in schools and community events, which align perfectly with this year's World No Tobacco Day theme of 'protecting the environment'.

"Ten years ago, smoking rates among Mob were 51%, now they're down to 39%, but we can't just focus on smoking cessation, we also need to focus on population health; to give people the right information to make good, healthy choices; to make Deadly Choices."

World No Tobacco Day is an extremely important day to raise awareness in the community around smoking, to start a conversation and recognise the support that is needed among communities to give up tobacco use.

"It's an outstanding outcome to have our health education and promotional programs acknowledged globally, which reinforces the capacity of Deadly Choices to help close the gap in health and life expectancy outcomes among Aboriginal and Torres Strait communities from right across the country," confirmed IUIH CEO Adrian Carson.

“Since inception more than 10 years ago, Deadly Choices has brought about a 4000% increase in health check activity across Southeast Queensland alone.

“Using elite sporting teams to assist with engagement among Australian communities, Deadly Choices successfully instils the benefits of healthy eating and exercise, plus highlighting the dangers of smoking and sugar consumption.

“During World No Tobacco Day I would especially like to thank and recognise the ongoing support of Australia’s Tackling Indigenous Smoking (TIS) program and particularly National Coordinator, Professor Tom Calma who has been an ongoing supporter and advocate of Deadly Choices since inception in 2009 and was responsible for endorsing our submission to the World Health Organisation.

“The partnerships that exist between UIIH, TIS and Quitline, coupled with the accolades that come from receiving such acclaim in our ongoing efforts around tobacco cessation throughout Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Australia, substantiate our standing as a world leader in the field.

Indigenous Australians live eight years shorter than the national average, with smoking rates currently at 39% compared to non-Indigenous populations at just 14%.

Smoking is specifically attributed to 37% of all Indigenous deaths, however the work of Deadly Choices seeks to encourage behavioural change to reduce this trend to empower individuals and entire communities to take control of their own health.

Deadly Choices will again implement widespread messaging around the dangers of smoking during World No Tobacco Day activities. Tobacco stall community events will be staged across Australia, while a series of Deadly Choices educational programs will be delivered into schools throughout Queensland.

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**Further information:**

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