



MIDCENTRAL DISTRICT HEALTH BOARD
In Your Hands is Business is Success

“As a government health target smoking cessation is getting *the* prioritisation and recognition it **deserves**”

Murray Georgel
CEO

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Executive Champions for ABC Smoking Cessation at Palmerston North Hospital

Murray Georgel: CEO

What does it mean to be a Champion?

For me, being an ABC Smoking Cessation executive champion means making smoking cessation a priority and giving it the recognition it deserves within our organisation.

Murray's Story:

Nine years, three months and six hours ago I quit smoking. I did it for three main reasons. 1) Family reasons – I felt my children were at an impressionable age where they were attending social events and other interactions and I needed to be a good role model and demonstrate that smoking isn't okay. 2) I did it for my own health. 3) I was in a leadership role as the hospital's CEO and I was a smoker. I decided to announce that the Palmerston North Hospital campus was going to become smokefree so it was no longer appropriate for me as a leader to be a smoker.

It's easy to quit smoking, I did it many times. To be successful in quitting you have to do it for yourself though. You need to think about it and have a means of achieving it to be successful.

The advantage of being an ex smoker is that you can try and help others to do the same. It's hard to enforce a behaviour but social connections and support do help.

In my position I am able to encourage the ABC Smoking Cessation programme within MDHB. As a Government health target it gets the prioritisation and recognition it deserves. As an organisation we can help make smoking cessation a prominent topic at the Government's table and get it maximum air-time. The ABC Smoking Cessation taskforce has had the opportunity to demonstrate their work and achievements to the Hospital Advisory Committee. Smoking cessation is something that MDHB strongly supports and we will continue to improve our services and offer our support to those who want it.