



News release

Health Minister asks Nunavummiut to butt out

IQALUIT, Nunavut (January 15, 2001) – Health and Social Services Minister Ed Picco launches National Non-Smoking Week in Nunavut today with the release of a public service video, the latest in a series of public information materials produced for a Nunavut-wide non-smoking campaign.

The 60-second video, which was produced by the Department of Health and Social Services, will air on the Aboriginal Peoples' Television Network and CBC North this week.

“The issue of smoking is extremely important,” Minister Picco said. “This television ad is one of a number of initiatives the Department of Health and Social Services has launched since December to discourage people from starting to smoke and to encourage those who do smoke to quit.”

Other initiatives include anti-tobacco workshops, radio public service announcements and posters targeted to youth, as well as ongoing discussions with Nunavut mayors to encourage activities at the municipal level to recognize World No-Tobacco Day scheduled for May 31. Discussions are also ongoing between the department and the RCMP to address the issue of the accessibility of tobacco products to minors.

“The department will continue to develop anti-smoking resources for Nunavut, but it is vital that communities get involved as well,” Minister Picco said.

Minister Picco will bring the non-smoking message to students at Aqsarniik Ilinniarvik Middle School in Iqaluit on Weedless Wednesday. The Minister wants to hear what students think about smoking and he would like to get their advice on how best to discourage young people from becoming smokers.

“This is the age group we really need to target,” Minister Picco said. “The fact is that by age 19, 75 per cent of our youth are smoking. That’s why I want to hear from young people how best to tackle the problem.”

-30-

For more information, contact:

Allison Brewer
Communications Advisor
Department of Health & Social Services
Government of Nunavut
☎ 1-(867) 975-5717
Email: abrewer@gov.nu.ca