

Under Embargo until May 31, 2018 at 12:01am

Date: May 31, 2018

On World No Tobacco Day, The Lung Association of Nova Scotia & Smoke-Free Nova Scotia announce the Inaugural Tobacco Control Symposium in Dartmouth, an event designed to discuss strategies for advancing tobacco control in our province.

On Friday, September 28th, the Lung Association of Nova Scotia and Smoke-Free Nova Scotia are co-hosting the inaugural Tobacco Control Symposium. The event will bring together 70 health and addictions professionals to share best practices, effective policies, and emerging trends to reduce smoking rates in our province. Two of the country's leading tobacco control experts Dr. David Hammond, Professor and CIHR Applied Chair in Public Health in the School of Public Health & Health Systems at the University of Waterloo and Dr. Peter Selby, the Chief of Medicine in Psychiatry Division, Deputy Physician-in-Chief of Education, and a Clinician Scientist at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health will be the plenary speakers at the event.

Tobacco is the leading cause of preventable disease and death in Nova Scotia. With 20% of the population smoking, Nova Scotia has the highest provincial smoking rates in the country.

Nationally, the Tobacco Endgame Strategy has set targets to reduce smoking rates to under 5% of the population nationally, by 2035. Robert MacDonald, President and CEO of the Lung Association of Nova Scotia is optimistic the Tobacco Control Symposium will have a positive impact. "Our province needs to do more to save the lives of people at risk of getting lung disease from tobacco use," said MacDonald. "If we achieve 5% smoking rates by 2035, we will have approximately 150,000 less smokers in Nova Scotia. The Tobacco Control Symposium is going to be a great starting point for achieving those aggressive targets."

"This symposium will focus on three "Es": Endgame strategies, Evidence-based tobacco cessation and Emerging topics in tobacco control," said Mohammed Al-Hamdani, Executive Director of Smoke-Free NS. "A concerted effort is crucial to aggressively reduce smoking rates in Nova Scotia and meet the ambitious goal of provincial smoking rates under 5% by 2035. This symposium represents the leadership of Smoke-Free Nova Scotia and the Lung Association of Nova Scotia in taking an active step towards the tobacco endgame in Nova Scotia."

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The Mental Health Foundation of Nova Scotia will also have representatives attending the symposium. “Mental illness and addictions are closely linked,” says Starr Cunningham, President and CEO of the Mental Health Foundation of Nova Scotia. “We need to create greater awareness of the burden of smoking among people with mental illness. We’re hopeful this symposium will result in strategies aimed at impacting real change.”

The symposium will act as a forum for health and addictions professionals seeking to share and discuss knowledge around clinical tobacco treatment, program development, addictions and mental health, vulnerable populations and effective policy and advocacy.

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About the Lung Association of Nova Scotia

The Lung Association of Nova Scotia is a volunteer-driven charity organization whose mission is to improve quality of life by controlling and preventing lung disease through education, advocacy, patient services and research.

For more information on the Tobacco Control Symposium contact:

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