

**MEDIA RELEASE**  
**For Immediate Release**  
**29 September 2016**

**Smoke Free Controlled Purchase Operation**

Tobacco retailers in Nelson were visited this week during a Tobacco Controlled Purchase Operation. The operation involved supervising a person under the age of 18 attempting to purchase cigarettes on retail premises.

The Nelson Marlborough Public Health Service conducted the operation with 37 premises visited. There were no sales made to the 17 year old volunteer.

Peter Burton Service Manager for Primary and Community is pleased with this result.

“The majority of retailers did the correct thing and asked our volunteer for identification, which is the best policy. The simple message should always be if the person looks under 25 years ask for ID; No ID No sale.”

End

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Controlled purchase operations are conducted by Smoke-Free Enforcement Officers using an underage volunteer to ensure tobacco retailers comply with the Smoke-free Environments Act 1990 which prohibits the sale of tobacco products to persons under 18 years of age.

A retailer who sells tobacco products to underage buyers will be referred to the Ministry of Health and will be issued with infringement notices that carry \$500 fines.

The Public Health Service continues to monitor retailers of tobacco products who have sold to underage buyers and will carry out further Controlled Purchase Operations targeting those retailers.

Contact:

**Jane Horder**

**Communications Officer, Nelson Marlborough Health**

Private Bag 18, Nelson 7042, New Zealand

DDI: 03 539 5346, Internal ext 8346 or 027 659 7090