



Media Release

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Quit relaunches hard hitting “Sponge” advertising campaign

On May 22, Quit will launch a public education campaign reinforcing the negative impact of smoking on the lungs and highlighting how Quitline (13 7848) can support people wherever they are on their quitting journey. The campaign will run across Victorian television, radio and digital platforms, until 2 July 2022.

In this iconic campaign, a sponge is used as a metaphor for the lungs soaking up tar from cigarettes. A pair of hands then wrings out the black and sodden sponge.

Dr Sarah White, director of Quit said it was well-established that hard hitting, anti-smoking campaigns motivate and support people who smoke to seek help to quit and drive calls to the Quitline.

“Sponge’ gets people who smoke thinking about the negative and immediate effect each cigarette is having on their lungs and motivates them to quit.”

“Using a sponge to represent the lungs is powerful because it really helps people grasp that inhaling smoke or aerosols from e-cigarettes, loads the lungs with chemicals,” said Dr White.

Dr Sandro Demaio, CEO of VicHealth, a major funder of Quit, said public health campaigns like Sponge are vital for supporting more people across Victoria to stop smoking.

“One in ten people in Victoria smoke every day. The sooner someone stops smoking, the sooner they start to be able to breathe more easily. Within three months the lungs’ natural cleaning system is recovering, removing mucus and tar,” Dr Demaio said.

“This campaign is vital for reducing smoking rates, supporting more people across Victoria to lead healthier, happier and longer lives.”

The campaign also highlights that Quitline counsellors are trained professionals who can offer tailored, real-world quitting advice and strategies. Using the Quitline doubles the chance that a quit attempt will be successful.



“We want more people to recognise that Quitline can be their personal support system along their quitting journey,” added Dr White. “Counsellors are there to listen, to provide information and to support the caller make their own plan to quit. There is no judgment, just someone who understands.”

Quitline helped Amanda achieve her quitting goal. She used to smoke 10 - 12 cigarettes a day before quitting with the help of a Quitline counsellor.

“Quitline support and counselling really helped me to quit. They offered simple and useful strategies which were achievable, and they broke it down week by week for me,” said Amanda.

“One of my favourite tips was to buy a magazine when I went supermarket shopping as that was often when a craving would kick in.”

“I have been smoke free for over three years and Quitline counsellors provided me with simple tips to get me through each day. I am so much more active and now go for 10km runs, have completed half marathons and regularly cycle to work,” added Amanda.

The Quitline Difference TV campaign is supported by radio and digital advertising and runs until July 2. It will be paired with the iconic Sponge campaign.

For support to break free from smoking visit quit.org.au/quitisheretohelp.

For campaign information visit the [campaign hub](#).

There is information available in [Arabic](#), [Chinese](#) and [Vietnamese](#).

For more quitting advice, visit quit.org.au or call the Quitline on 13 7848 between 8am and 8pm Monday to Friday. Quitline is a non-judgemental and culturally inclusive telephone service for all, including the [LGBTIQ+ community](#). [Aboriginal Quitline](#) counsellors are also available. An interpreter service is available for languages other than English.

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Quit is a partnership between VicHealth, the State Government of Victoria and Cancer Council Victoria. For more information, visit: quit.org.au