

Disseminating Information on Tobacco Policy Implementation Through Earned Media Pitches

SUBJECT: Thirdhand Smoke in ‘Smoke-Free’ Hotels

Holiday season is here again and many people are busy making travel plans and booking their hotel stays. Did you know that some hotels that claim to be “Smoke-Free” can still expose their guests to thirdhand smoke?

In a recent study [study](#), San Diego State University researchers analyzed more than 332,000 TripAdvisor guest reviews about their experiences staying in 477 U.S.-based hotels. They found that many 'smoke-free' hotels expose guests to thirdhand tobacco smoke. ~10% of reviews from non-smoking rooms cited complaints related to tobacco, electronic cigarettes, or cannabis pollution.

[Thirdhand smoke](#) is the tobacco residue that sticks to surfaces such as walls, furniture, clothes and skin when someone has smoked in the area. This residue can accumulate over time and get absorbed through the skin, by ingestion and inhalation. **This is [alarming](#) because exposure to secondhand and thirdhand smoke can have a negative impact on the health of non-smokers, especially children, increasing their risk of developing asthma and cancer.**

To help protect people against secondhand and thirdhand smoke, smokers should be encouraged to use dedicated smoking areas and motivated to connect with their healthcare provider to help them quit. NYC Treats Tobacco is a project funded by the New York State Department of Health that partners with healthcare and behavioral health organizations in New York City to ensure that providers are effectively assisting their patients in quitting tobacco.

Would you be interested in learning more about the dangers of thirdhand smoke? Dr. Donna Shelley, an expert in tobacco control and Professor at NYU School of Global Public Health, is the Director of NYC Treats Tobacco. She is a nationally recognized expert in tobacco use treatment and policy and is available for an interview.

Thank you for your consideration.

SUBJECT: Ways to Love Your Heart this February

February, the month of Love and the American Heart Month, is a gentle reminder to take care of something very dear to us all.

Just last month, the American Heart Association supported Gov. Kathy Hochul's plans to achieve a tobacco-free next generation of New Yorkers. Part of the proposal is directed towards reducing tobacco purchase which will prove beneficial to everybody's cardiovascular health.

February, the month of Love and the American Heart Month, is a gentle reminder to take care of something very dear to us all.

Exposure to tobacco smoke has been found to affect cardiovascular health of individuals. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention data shows that 1 in 4 deaths due to cardiovascular causes is due to smoking.² Research has shown that smoking causes plaque build up in the heart vessels and is a major risk factor for heart disease. Healthy lifestyle choices such as the following can help decrease the risk of heart disease.

- Quit smoking, or don't start
- Avoid breathing secondhand smoke
- Eat low-fat, low-salt foods most of the time; eat fresh fruits and vegetables
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Exercise regularly
- Find healthier options to cope with stress

Visiting your healthcare provider to screen for heart disease due to tobacco smoke would be the best step towards identifying any cardiovascular disease. NYC Treats Tobacco is a project funded by the New York State Department of Health that partners with healthcare and behavioral health organizations in New York City to ensure that providers are effectively assisting their patients in quitting tobacco.

We'd love to connect you with Dr. Donna Shelley, Professor at NYU School of Global Public Health and the Director of NYC Treats Tobacco, to provide an expert opinion on discussions related to tobacco control.

Thank you for your consideration.

SUBJECT: Tobacco & Oral Health - National Dentist's Day

Did you know that March 6th is National Dentist's Day? While we may not necessarily enjoy going to the dentist, this serves as an opportunity to remember how tobacco can negatively affect oral health and learn how we can protect our teeth.

Smoking tobacco has been found to cause tooth decay, oral cancer, gum disease and other problems in smokers.¹ In fact, smoking is the most common cause of oral cancer with the risk being 10 times higher than that of non-smokers.^{2,3} Getting a regular dental check up is therefore just as important as getting a routine physical. Dentists are able to help patients maintain oral health and also spot signs of anything serious early on, which might otherwise be missed.

People who wish to quit using tobacco should connect with their dentist or healthcare provider for support. New York City Treats Tobacco is a project funded by the New York State Department of Health that partners with healthcare and behavioral health organizations in New York City to ensure that providers are effectively assisting their patients in quitting tobacco. We'd love to connect you with Dr. Donna Shelley, Professor at NYU School of Global Public Health and the Director of NYC Treats Tobacco, to provide more information about tobacco cessation and control.

Thank you for your consideration.

SUBJECT: April 7 is World Health Day

April 7th marks the 75th anniversary of [World Health Day](#). Given that this year's theme is 'Health for All,' it is important to acknowledge the progress that has been made in addressing the number one cause of preventable death, tobacco use, and how it continues to disproportionately burden certain populations.

While the smoking prevalence among adults in 2020 was 3.5% lower in New York State than it was across the United States, this burden still exists among various New Yorkers. A recent [study](#) of New Yorkers showed that smoking prevalence was higher among adults reporting frequent mental distress, adults enrolled in medicaid, adults who are unemployed, adults living with a disability, adults earning less than a \$25,000 income and adults with less than a high school education compared to that of all adults.

World Health Day is an opportunity to reflect on ways to support populations disproportionately impacted by tobacco use. NYC Treats Tobacco is a project funded by the New York State Department of Health that partners with healthcare and behavioral health organizations in New York City to ensure that providers are effectively assisting their patients in quitting tobacco. Dr. Donna Shelley, an expert in tobacco control and Professor at NYU School of Global Public Health, is the Director of NYC Treats Tobacco. She is a nationally recognized expert in tobacco use treatment and policy and is available for an interview to learn more about tobacco cessation in New York.

Thank you for your consideration.

SUBJECT: Tobacco expert to speak about NYC's cigarette tax debate

The final budget plan for New York Governor Kathy Hochul's proposal to raise New York's cigarette tax by \$1/pack from \$4.35 to \$5.35 will be determined on April 1 which is also Take Down Tobacco Day which is dedicated to engage kids and encourages them to be tobacco free.^{1,2} While this proposal is Hochul's approach to taking down tobacco and to create a "tobacco-free generation," it is not without controversy.

On one hand, organizations such as the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids publicly expressed support for Hochul's proposal as a way to improve health and save lives for generations to come.³ On the other hand, Todd Nesbit and Michael LaFaive of Wall Street Journal argue that raising cigarette tax would only end up increasing smuggling into the state rather than deter tobacco use.⁴

With the heated debate surrounding the implications and effectiveness of Governor Hochul's proposal, we'd love to connect you with Dr. Donna Shelley, Professor at NYU School of Global Public Health and the Director of NYC Treats Tobacco, to provide more information about tobacco cessation and control. New York City Treats Tobacco is a project funded by the New York State Department of Health that partners with healthcare and behavioral health organizations in New York City to ensure that providers are effectively assisting their patients in quitting tobacco.

Thank you for your consideration.

1. https://www.health.ny.gov/press/releases/2023/2023-02-09_flavored_tobacco_products.htm
2. <https://nationaltoday.com/take-down-tobacco-national-day-of-action/>
3. <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/tobacco-free-kids-strongly-supports-gov-hochuls-plan-to-end-sale-of-all-flavored-tobacco-products-and-increase-the-cigarette-tax-in-new-york-301736628.html>
4. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/taxes-have-made-new-york-into-an-empire-of-cigarette-smuggling-avoidance-evasion-flavor-revenue-hochul-f2b11e15>

SUBJECT: World No Tobacco Day

May 31st marks [World No Tobacco Day](#) (WNTD), the World Health Organization's (WHO) celebration empowering people around the world to build a tobacco-free future. This year's theme, "we need food, not tobacco," aims to "raise awareness about alternative crop production and marketing opportunities for tobacco farmers and encourage them to grow sustainable, nutritious crops."

Access to nutrition is a particularly important concern in NYC in which several low income neighborhoods in the city have poor access to fresh, healthy and affordable foods. In fact, [for every supermarket, there are an average of 13 bodegas](#) in what are considered "food deserts." Increasing food security while decreasing consumption of tobacco products allows communities to tackle multiple health issues at once, taking leaps forward in improving their quality of public health.

We would like to connect Dr. Donna Shelley, an nationally recognized expert in tobacco control, who is available for an interview to provide an expert opinion on the negative effects of tobacco on health. Dr. Shelley is also a Professor at NYU School of Global Public Health and the Director of NYC Treats Tobacco. NYC Treats Tobacco is a project funded by the New York State Department of Health that partners with healthcare and behavioral health organizations in New York City to ensure that providers are effectively assisting their patients in quitting tobacco.

Thank you for your consideration.