

20 March 2019

The Hon Michael Ferguson  
Minister for Health  
PO Box 537  
Launceston TAS 7250

Dear Minister,

**Re: Tobacco 21 amendment to the Public Health Act**

The Menzies Institute for Medical Research at the University of Tasmania is committed to ensuring healthier, longer and better lives for Tasmanians. We strongly support efforts to reduce smoking, a major contributor to the burden of disease in Tasmania, including through the proposed amendment to the Public Health Act to raise the minimum legal age of purchase to 21 (herein Tobacco 21).

There is growing evidence that raising the minimum age of purchase of cigarettes to 21 will have an impact on the prevalence of smoking. For example, in the United States, formal evaluations <sup>1</sup> and detailed modelling studies <sup>2</sup>, suggest that this legislation could reduce smoking uptake by around 25% in those aged 16 to 17 years. On the advice of our researchers with considerable expertise in the field, I would like to lend Menzies support for Tobacco 21. We believe it should be a part of a comprehensive tobacco control strategy including best practice measures of social marketing campaigns, cessation services and smoke free areas, among others. Tasmania has long been at the forefront of tobacco control. With the passing of Tobacco 21, we would continue to lead the way and help more Tasmanians to live smoke free.

If you require further information, please contact Associate Professor Seana Gall who is head of our Cardiovascular and Respiratory Health and Diseases Theme –  
Seana.Gall@utas.edu.au

Yours sincerely,



**Professor Alison Venn**  
Director