



## Progress being made on smoke-free spaces across island

Wednesday, 8 March 2017

### IPH support move in NI towards smoke-free cars to protect children

A new report highlights that steady progress is being made in creating more smoke-free spaces across the island of Ireland. However, the Institute of Public Health in Ireland (IPH) says that the next stage is to legislate for smoke-free cars in order to protect children from the ill effects of second hand smoke.

The IPH snapshot report, *Smoke-Free Spaces on the Island of Ireland* – an update on a report published in 2016 – was released today to mark National No Smoking Day (for advice and support to quit smoking in Northern Ireland visit [want2stop.info](http://want2stop.info)).

IPH's Dr Helen McAvoy explained that this report presents information from a range of different sources on the progress that is being made and the challenges faced – North and South – towards the development of smoke-free workplaces, cars, health services and public spaces. Dr McAvoy said that it is positive that the numbers reporting smoke-free cars is on the rise in Northern Ireland but we can not over emphasise the importance of protecting children from the ill effects of second hand smoke.

"The *Continuous Household Survey* carried out in 2007 and 2008 showed that 60% of adults in Northern Ireland reported that smoking was not permitted in any car. The 2015/2016 *Health Survey in Northern Ireland* reveals that that number has grown by one sixth to 70% of all adults. 51% of adults in the most deprived fifth of the population reported that smoking is not permitted in any car compared to 81% in the least deprived segment."

Dr Helen McAvoy says that the same 2015/2016 *Health Survey in Northern Ireland* also shows that:

- Among households who own a car, 85% of adults reported that smoking is not permitted in any car;

The *Smoke-Free Spaces on the Island of Ireland* report also shows that among children aged 11-16 years in Northern Ireland who reported that they lived with an adult smoker, three-in-ten reported that smoking was permitted in the family car (*Young Persons' Behaviour and Attitudes Survey 2013*).

Dr Helen McAvoy stated the IPH is supportive of legislation in NI protecting children from the ill effects of second hand smoke in cars. The last Minister for Health undertook a consultation on smoking in cars while children are present and it's vital that we ensure that Northern Ireland's policy in this area comes into line with England, Wales and the Republic of Ireland." (See IPH's response to the consultation at [www.publichealth.ie](http://www.publichealth.ie))

Dr Helen McAvoy said that IPH's report contains data showing progress on smoking in the home in Northern Ireland with a big jump in the number of Northern Ireland adults reporting that smoking not permitted in the home from 61% in 2007/08 to 80% in 2015/16.

"A further analysis shows that there is a big variation in smoking in the home when socio-economic factors are taken into account. In Northern Ireland, over half of children aged 11-16 years in the most deprived areas (57.9%) lived with an adult smoker whereas around a quarter (25.2%) of children from the least deprived areas lived with an adult smoker."

Dr Helen McAvoy concluded that while the data shows that considerable progress is being made in reducing children's exposure to smoking, exposures among children in disadvantaged circumstances are deeply concerning in terms of the impact on child health.

## **Notes to Editors**

### ***Institute of Public Health in Ireland (IPH)***

The Institute of Public Health in Ireland is an all-island body which supports cooperation on public health North and South to promote collective action for sustained improvements in health with a particular focus on addressing health inequalities.

### ***Previous IPH Smoke-Free Publications***

IPH has published a number of reports on creating a smoke-free island over recent years:

- Last year, IPH published its first snapshot report on *Smoke-Free Spaces on the Island of Ireland*;
- In 2015, the Institute published *Smoke-Free Spaces: Progress in reducing exposure to second-hand smoke in Northern Ireland incorporating the five-year review of smoke-free legislation* (<http://www.publichealth.ie/document/iph-report/smoke-free-spaces-progress-reducing-exposure-second-hand-smoke-northern-ireland>);
- In conjunction with the TobaccoFree Research Institute Ireland, IPH published *A Tobacco-Free Future – an all-island report on tobacco inequalities and childhood* (<http://www.publichealth.ie/document/iph-report/tobacco-free-future-all-island-report-tobacco-inequalities-and-childhood-2013>).

The Smoking in cars consultation closed March 3 <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/consultations>

## **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT:**

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