

Changes in Child Exposure to Environmental Tobacco Smoke (CHETS) Wales

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WALES

CHETS Wales

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The study

In collaboration with researchers at the Child and Adolescent Health Research Unit (CAHRU) at the University of Edinburgh, Cardiff Institute of Society, Health and Ethics have been commissioned by the Welsh Assembly Government to investigate the impact of the ban on smoking in enclosed public places on the exposure of primary school children to second hand smoke. The legislation, which will come into effect on 2nd April, 2007 states that it will be an offence to:

- Fail to display no-smoking signs in premises covered by the law
- Smoke in a smoke-free place
- Fail to prevent smoking in a smoke-free place

Implementation of the smoking ban in Wales is anticipated to produce significant reductions in second hand smoke exposure (particularly in workplaces and in leisure facilities linked to the hospitality trade) and, linked to this, reductions in mortality. It may also have another important public health benefit by reducing smoking among current smokers and changing social attitudes and norms around smoking.

The CHETS Wales survey is designed to primarily address two hypotheses:

- Among children who live in households with other smokers, there will be no change in children's exposure to second hand smoke in the home following the introduction of smoking ban legislation.
- Among all children, there will be a reduction in children's exposure to smoking, children's perception of smoking as a normative behaviour, and primarily, second hand smoke.

The study involves conducting a repeated cross-sectional study of children in year 6 on two occasions. The first survey will take place before the ban comes into force. The second will be with a different group of students between April and June 2008, after the ban. On each occasion, approximately 2,000 students in 80 primary schools across Wales will be asked to provide questionnaire data (on own smoking behaviour and exposure to second hand smoke in public places) and saliva samples (for cotinine analysis to bio chemically measure exposure to second hand smoke).

Data collection for the first survey sweep began at the end of January 2007 and will finish at the end of March 2007.

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