U of T research supports Ontario ban on cigarette displays

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Toronto, ON. – Just weeks before Ontario implements a ban on the retail display of all tobacco products, new research from the Ontario Tobacco Research Unit at the University of Toronto shows that consumers have been bombarded by extensive tobacco promotion at point of sale.

Places where tobacco is sold have become important environments for the tobacco industry to communicate with current, former and potential smokers through large tobacco product displays, countertop displays and signs advertising tobacco.

The research conducted by Joanna Cohen, a professor in the Department of Public Health Sciences at the University of Toronto and Principal Investigator with the Ontario Tobacco Research Unit, involved an examination of over 480 establishments including convenience stores, gas stations and grocery stores in 20 Ontario cities.

“The province’s upcoming ban on displaying tobacco products couldn’t come sooner,” says Cohen. “Our research shows tobacco promotions were extensive in stores across Ontario. The vast majority of chain convenience stores had large displays of cigarettes with shelf gliders (98%), shelf liners (97%), and a top display panel (89%) colour-coded to complement various cigarette brands, and 89% had tobacco products placed within one foot of candy.”

The team headed by Cohen, which also included researchers from University of Regina and University of Western Ontario, found that

tobacco promotions were higher among stores close to a school, and in neighbourhoods with lower median household incomes.

Source: University of Toronto

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