

Australian workers who smoke hit national pocketbook

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Credit: American Heart Association

Smoking among the working population is predicted to cost Australia an estimated \$340 billion in lost productivity, according to preliminary research presented at the American Heart Association's Scientific Sessions 2017, a premier global exchange of the latest advances in

cardiovascular science for researchers and clinicians.

The health costs of [smoking](#) are well-known, but the impact on productivity is not. Currently, 1.9 million Australians (13.9 percent) between 20 and 69 years of age are smokers.

Researchers used published data on the rate of deaths, absenteeism, and working while sick among smokers to estimate how much productivity would be lost to smoking in the working-age population until age 69. They found that:

- Australia's currently smoking workforce would lose an estimated 2.9 million years of life and 2.7 million years of productive years lost, equating to an estimated \$340 billion in U.S. dollars – not including healthcare expenditures.
- This represents a 6 percent loss in productive years and a 4 percent loss in years of life compared to a non-smoking workforce.

These results highlight the importance of [smoking prevention](#), the researchers said.

Provided by American Heart Association

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