

Federal Update: New IOM Report Shows Raising the Minimum Purchase Age for Tobacco Products Can Save Lives

March 12, 2015

The Institute of Medicine released a report this morning about the public health impact of raising the minimum age of legal access (MLA) to tobacco products. The Committee found that raising the MLA to tobacco products will reduce tobacco use initiation, particularly among adolescents 15 to 17 years of age; improve the health of Americans across their lifespan; and save lives.

The report suggests that raising the MLA in the United States will likely lead to a substantial reduction in smoking prevalence, with large gains realized in the 21 and 25 age range. If the MLA were raised now, there would be a 3 percent decrease in prevalence of tobacco use among adults if the MLA were raised to 19, a 12 percent decrease if raised to 21, and a 16 percent decrease if raised to 25.

In particular, the report indicates that if the MLA were raised now to 21 nationwide, there would be approximately 223,000 fewer premature deaths, 50,000 fewer deaths from lung cancer, and 4.2 million fewer years of life lost for those born between 2000 and 2019.

To see the American Lung Association's statement, click [here](#).

To view the IOM report, click [here](#).



Center for Tobacco Policy & Organizing, March 12, 2015

If you have questions about this analysis, please contact Samantha Pellon at (Samantha.Pellon@lung.org) or Lindsey Freitas at (Lindsey.Freitas@lung.org) at (916) 554-5864 (LUNG).