



THE NORDIC COUNTRIES – A NON-SMOKING AREA

The Board of the Northern Nurses' Federation (NNF)¹ met on 5-6 May 2003, and would now like to

Corroborate that:

- the fight against tobacco-related diseases is one of the most important areas of priority within international health policy;
- approximately one-third of the world's population over the age of 15 smoke;
- 3.5–4 million people die each year worldwide from tobacco-related illness;
- the harmful effects of tobacco cause many people unnecessary suffering and an early death;
- this generates enormous social costs in the form of loss of productivity and of treatment that could have been avoided;
- in the Nordic countries, 20–30% of all inhabitants over 15 still smoke;
- in spite of their role of setting an example, there are still many health workers who smoke – even though the proportion is somewhat lower than that among the general public.

The NNF therefore wishes to express its full support for all actions that can limit – and in the long term eliminate – all forms of the use of tobacco products. We **challenge our national authorities** to intensify the fight against tobacco and to counteract the harm resulting from active or passive smoking by:

- carrying out sales restrictions and imposing a ban on smoking in public places;
- allocating more funds to assist users of tobacco products to conquer their dependence;
- organising systematic and goal-oriented efforts to prevent children and young people starting to smoke or to use other tobacco products;
- ensuring all employees the right to a tobacco-free working environment – in working time and whenever they are at the workplace;
- initiating measures that can enhance nurses' skills in the prevention of the use of tobacco products and in aversion techniques.

As role models and knowledge-conveyers nurses hold a key position in the work of preventing people from starting to smoke and in assisting smokers to stop. **The NNF would therefore like:**

- to declare that all arrangements under NNF's management are to be non-smoking events;
- to be able to take it for granted that a similar attitude is followed in all the member associations;
- to request member associations to implement total non-smoking measures at their national and local offices, if this has not already been done;
- to be able to presume that none of our members smoke during working time;
- to request that the member associations participate actively in the authorities' tobacco prevention work;

¹ The Northern Nurses' Federation (NNF) is a cooperative body that aims to contribute to the further development of the health service in general and the nursing service in particular in the Nordic countries.

The NNF consists of the Danish Nurses' Organization (DNO), the Finnish Nurses' Association (FNA), the Faroese Nurses' Association, the Icelandic Nurses' Association (INA), the Norwegian Nurses' Association (NNA) and the Nurse Section of the Swedish Association of Health Professionals. The Federation thus represents 290,000 Nordic nurses. NNF's Board consists of representatives of the member associations' top management.

- to request that the member associations implement measures that may persuade their own members to stop using tobacco products;
- to request that the member associations implement measures that can increase nurses' competence in prevention and aversion techniques.

The Nordic nurses' associations take their share of the responsibility for making the Nordic countries a non-smoking area.

References:

First European Guidelines on the Treatment of Tobacco Dependence, European Forum of National Nursing and Midwifery Associations and WHO, Andorra, 9-10 March 2001.

WHO Evidence Based Recommendations on the Treatment of Tobacco Dependence, June 2001.

Warsaw Declaration for a Tobacco-free Europe, Warsaw, 18-19 February, 2002..

ICN Position Statement on Tobacco Use and Health, ICN 1999.

ICN Fact Sheet on Nurses for Tobacco-Free Life, ICN 1999.

The Role of the Nurse in Tobacco Control and Cessation, ICN Monograph 2003