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## Help to stop smoking and start healing

AN innovative device known as a “smokerlyzer” is helping a group of community members at Miller quit smoking ahead of World No Tobacco Day on 31 May.

Participants in the free seven-week quit group at the Budyari Aboriginal Community Health Centre are using the smokerlyzer to measure the amount of harmful carbon monoxide in their breath.

South Western Sydney Local Health District’s Health Promotion Service Director Mandy Williams said group members could see the levels of carbon monoxide decline which helped to motivate them to quit.

“Carbon monoxide increases the risk of heart disease and cancer in smokers,” Ms Williams said.

“The smokerlyzer is a great way to get a sense of how the quit group members are progressing as they check their carbon monoxide levels each week.

“When you stop smoking you start healing and 10 years after quitting the risk of lung cancer is likely to have fallen by as much as 50 per cent.”

Community member Robyne Jones completed the seven-week quit group which she says changed her life.

“Now if anyone asks me for a cigarette I don’t just tell them I haven’t got any, I let them know about all the chemicals they’re sucking in when they smoke,” Ms Jones said.

Community health staff at Budyari, in partnership with the Health District, are holding another community quit group in August.

The program includes weekly group support and access to nicotine replacement therapy.

The NSW Government is investing \$338,697 over four years in the Quit for Life initiative supporting pregnant and post-natal Aboriginal women in south western Sydney to quit smoking.

In addition, it is investing \$75,000 over two years helping the Vietnamese community to quit through the Vietnamese Tobacco Project.

For more details and to register for the next quit group contact Budyari Aboriginal Community Health Centre on 8781 8020.

