



Working for a tobacco-free Scotland

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Launch of new award to recognise young people's contribution in tackling tobacco

Today [Tuesday, 1 September], the **Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland (REHIS)**, in partnership with **ASH Scotland** is launching a new award, the **Crofton Award** (1) to recognise the achievement of young people in reducing tobacco and smoking-related harm in Scotland.

Groups across Scotland who have been engaging young people in the issues surrounding smoking and tobacco are being encouraged to apply for the award. The award features a £1,000 cash prize to go towards the further development of tobacco control work for the winning group of young people. Applications for the award are being welcomed from today until the closing date on 21 October, with an award ceremony planned on November 18.

REHIS Chief Executive **Tom Bell**, commented:

"REHIS has, for 135 years, existed to promote environmental and public health through education, promotion, campaigning, and training. Many of REHIS's members are Environmental Health Officers, and have been at the forefront of ensuring compliance with Scotland's very successful smoke-free public places legislation.

"However, we've always recognised that enforcement needs to be backed up with education and awareness-raising. In the case of smoking, it's vital that any national or local policy is backed by engagement with, and the participation of, young people to encourage young smokers to kick the habit, or never to start in the first place.

"REHIS is presenting this unique award in order to give deserved credit to the innovative efforts of Scotland's young people, and the role they can play in positively influencing the choices their peers make when it comes to smoking."

ASH Scotland Chief Executive **Sheila Duffy**, said:

"I'm delighted to be able to support today's launch of the Crofton Award, recognising young people's contribution towards tackling tobacco. Sir John and Lady Eileen Crofton are pioneers in tobacco control and continue to actively support the reduction in tobacco-related harm in Scotland, so it's fitting an award in their name celebrates the innovation of young people in the same field. The development of the award recognises important changes in the way young people view smoking and the tobacco industry.

“Young people have traditionally been a prime target for big tobacco – the industry needs to recruit 15,000 (2) new smokers each year in Scotland to replace its customers who quit or die. However, more and more we see young people actively resisting the advances of the industry, and challenging pro-industry arguments through intelligent and innovative work.

“Often young people have a far better idea than adults about how to effectively work with their peers. This, combined with their enthusiasm, commitment, knowledge and ability to use new forms of media, means that young people are able to deliver messages and results that other organisations cannot.

“A growing number of young people in Scotland have worked hard to fight against an industry which sells a product that kills nearly 13,500 people in Scotland each year (3). I’m proud to support an award which gives these young people the recognition they deserve”

ENDS

Sheila Duffy is available for ISDN interview on 1st September. For more information, contact Rory Morrison on 0131 220 9469/ 0777 614 2299.

Tom Bell is available on 1st September for interviews and can be contacted on 0131 225 6999.

Notes for Editors

ASH Scotland is an independent Scottish charity working in partnership to protect people from the harm caused by tobacco. Registered Scottish charity number SC 010412. The Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland is a registered Scottish charity, Number SC009406.

More information on the Crofton Award will be available on the ASH Scotland website from 1 September 2009 onwards - www.ashscotland.org.uk/ash/7405.html

1. The **Crofton Award** is named in honour of Sir John Crofton, and Lady Eileen Crofton. Sir John Crofton, born in 1912, was a pioneer in the treatment of tuberculosis. As Professor of Respiratory Diseases and Tuberculosis at the University of Edinburgh from 1952-1977, Crofton is famous for developing a highly effective treatment for TB and insisting that a “100% cure for pulmonary TB is both a reasonable and achievable target”. He was knighted in 1977 and continues to campaign tirelessly around TB, tobacco control, amongst other health issues.

Dr Eileen Crofton was the first director of what is now ASH Scotland, founded in 1973, and has contributed actively to the debate on tobacco control for many decades. She has also published on the story of women medics during the First World War.

2. Taulbut M and Gordon D. (February 2008) Tobacco smoking in Scotland: an epidemiology briefing. Public Health Observatory Division, NHS Health Scotland. Available from: http://www.scotpho.org.uk/home/Publications/scotphoreports/pub_tobaccobriefing.asp

3. NHS Health Scotland, ISD Scotland and ASH Scotland (2007). An atlas of tobacco smoking in Scotland. NHS Health Scotland, Edinburgh. Available from: http://www.scotpho.org.uk/home/Publications/scotphoreports/pub_tobaccoatlas.asp