

# Qatar's malls urged to enforce anti-smoking laws

Centres should assign some of their employees to keep watch on people breaking the rules and officials could confiscate the material from violators

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Manama: Qatar's commercial complexes have been urged to help enforce anti-smoking guidelines in a bid to curb the growing phenomenon.

Dr Mohammad Bin Hamad Al Thani, Director of Public Health Department at the Supreme Council of Health (SCH), told Doha commercial centres' managers that rapid development has created obstacles in the enforcing law on smoking and urged them to help identify all breaches in the law and report them to the appropriate authorities.

Centres should assign some of their employees to keep watch on people breaking the rules and officials could confiscate the material from violators, the *Qatar Tribune* reported on Sunday.

Dr Shaikha Al Anoud Bin Mohammad Al Thani, the head of Health Reinforcement and Non-Transmissible Diseases in Public Health Department, called for public awareness campaigns on the disadvantages of smoking.

"Engaging in anti-smoking awareness campaign and showing respect to law will go a long way in prohibiting smoking, especially in closed areas," she said, quoted by the daily.

"The focus should be on activities and workshops to train individuals on how to deal with people breaking the rules," she said.

Last week, Qatar's National Cancer Society said that 37 per cent of women in the country were smokers.

However, Dr Moza Al Malki, a psychologist, said that the figure could be misleading, and was mainly related to a number of women who had taken voluntary retirement from education services.

"They have a lot of spare time and they feel depressed and ignored by society at large, so they might be smoking," she said. "The government must review the law which allows nationals to seek voluntary retirement at age 40," she told Qatari daily *The Peninsula*.