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## Drive to highlight harms of tobacco

BY PMA RASHEED

TARGETTING to secure about 10,000 pledges against the habit of tobacco use among the UAE residents, the Ministry of Health (MoH) teamed up with the Dubai Healthcare City (DHCC) to unveil an anti-cigar campaign commemorating "the World No Tobacco Day", which falls on May 31.

"The campaign has been designed to raise aware-

ness about the dangers of smoking, targeting both Emirati and expatriate communities across the UAE. Road shows, street plays, poster and art competitions, entertainment and an innovative "Quit and Win" competition from DHCC are the programmes planned as part of the drive," said Dr Mahmoud Fikri, CEO of Health Policies, at MoH.

"Tobacco use and abuse

has been on the rise and urgently needs to be addressed. The drive will help invite serious understanding of the risks of smoking in an educational and engaging way. Comprehensive roll-out at educational institutions and public and private organisations in each emirate are also part of the campaign," he added.

"The quit and win programme, commencing on May 31, will provide smok-

ers with the tools necessary to quit smoking through a number of support mechanisms, over a period of 30 days and will culminate in a prize draw on June 30 for those who have successfully quit smoking," Fikri pointed out.

Dr Ayesha Al Mutawa, Chair of the CR committee for DHCC said, "As the initiative helps smokers start a new and healthier lifestyle, we provide them

appropriate assistance, tools and education to support long-term smoking cessation. DHCC is working with the MoH to support the legislative efforts on tobacco control through public engagement and health awareness campaign."

"The creative poster designing programme will encourage people to draw health warnings for cigarette packaging. The win-

ning poster will be sent to Executive Board of the Health Minister Council of GCC, to be used as the official no-tobacco signage on cigarette packaging within the region. The selected posters will also be presented at a dedicated exhibition. The UAE is observing the World Health Organisation's recommendation to place no-tobacco picture on tobacco products," she added.