

## Research into Smoking Brings Professorship to Yayi Suryo

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The only girl of four siblings, Dra. Yayi Suryo Prabandari, M.Si., Ph.D., remembers that in their family, their father was the only one that smoked while her brothers did not. The father finally quit smoking when they were teenagers. This story had inspired Yayi, the sister of former sports minister Roy Suryo, to initiate smoke free village and home in her hometown, Yogyakarta. "Currently, there are 130s homes and 40 kampongs that have declared the smoke free area," said the lady born in Yogyakarta 53 years ago.

Yayi said despite the smoke free home situation, the number of smokers has not reduced significantly. The movement initiated since 2006 however has reduced down to 3 percent while 50 percent of men have no longer smoked in the house. "Around 70 percent of men have agreed that their home can be smoke free," she said.

Yayi admitted it was not easy to ask people to join the campaign. She had to attend neighbourhood meetings, projects, and gatherings to promote the campaign. But Yayi also said that it was easier to ask the people of Yogyakarta to accept change.

Not just initiated the smoke free area, Yayi also encouraged the smoke free campus condition at Faculty of Medicine since 2004. "In 2008 a declaration was announced for this campaign at the



university level. The Faculty of Medicine had even stopped scholarships from tobacco companies in 2006,” said the psychology scholar.

The smoke free campaign had been raised by Yayi since 1990. The minimum research on smoking in Indonesia had inspired Yayi to make the issue a topic of her research from her graduate to doctoral programme.

The only lecturer of Faculty of Medicine who is not a doctor is optimistic that one day Indonesia would follow the steps of over 173 countries that have ratified the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) as the basis for tobacco control policy. “Our tobacco control is not yet optimal. Here, tobacco adverts are displayed everywhere, it is still free to sell tobacco and the price is very cheap,” she said.

In her opinion, health promotion programme needed to be pushed by government, especially on smoke control. Reportedly, in 2016 the National Health Security funds worth Rp7.4 trillion were spent for cardiovascular diagnosis.

“The WHO declared that various non-communicable diseases were mostly triggered by smoke. So it’s time for paramedics to ask their patients if they have smoking habit already,” she said.

The persistence of Yayi for almost 20 years to do research in healthy life behaviour and health promotion on the impact of smoking has brought her professorship. She is scheduled to be inaugurated as professor in public health and nursing of Faculty of Medicine UGM on Thursday (15/2) in the Senate Hall UGM.

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