



Association of Directors of Public Health (UK)

## The Association of Directors of Public Health

### Statement on the regulations on standardised packaging for tobacco products

#### **ADPH welcomes the Government's announcement on the regulations for standardised packaging for tobacco products are voted on before the Election**

The Association of Directors of Public Health welcomes the Government's announcement that it will move forward and put the Regulations to introduce standardised packaging for tobacco products to a vote in Parliament before the General Election. These regulations are an important step to protecting the next generation of children and young people from starting to smoke.

A cross Party group of peers tabled an amendment to the Children and Families Bill, July 2013, giving powers to the government to make Regulations on standardised packaging. On the 28th November 2013 the Government announced that it would table its own amendment to the Bill (now Section 94 of the Children and Families Act 2014). This amendment was passed overwhelmingly in both the House of Lords and House of Commons.

Following strong support from both the Liberal Democrat and Labour leaderships, the government has ensured that children and young people are protected from future illness and premature death and have successfully thwarted lobbying efforts from the tobacco industry.

ADPH President Dr Janet Atherton said ***"We are extremely pleased that the Government has moved forward with the necessary regulations to introduce standardised packaging for tobacco products. Standardised packaging is an evidence-based intervention that will reduce the burden of premature death and disability and reduce health inequalities – particularly in the most deprived communities."***

***"With over 200,000 children in the UK taking up smoking each year, this measure will protect the future health of children and protect them from harm caused by tobacco."***

The standardised packaging of cigarettes and other tobacco products is intended to make starting to smoke less attractive to children and young people. Among existing adult smokers, two thirds report that they began to smoke before the age of 18, and almost two fifths before the age of 16. Standard packs will have no tobacco branding apart from the name of the product in a simple typeface, and will be covered in written and graphic health warnings and advice on quitting.

**ENDS**

#### **Further information**

The Association of Directors of Public Health (ADPH) is the representative body for Directors of Public Health (DsPH) in the UK. It seeks to improve and protect the health of the population through DPH development, sharing good practice, and policy and advocacy programmes. [www.adph.org.uk](http://www.adph.org.uk)

ADPH has a strong track record of collaboration with other stakeholders in public health, including those working within the NHS, local authorities and other sectors.

The measures we are calling for primarily protect the future health of children. Over 200,000 children in the UK take up smoking each year - standardised packaging will protect children from the marketing devices of the tobacco industry.

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ADPH is a member of the Smokefree Action Coalition, an alliance of over 250 organisations committed to promoting public health and reducing the harm caused by tobacco. <http://www.smokefreeaction.org.uk/>

Over 4000 health professionals signed a letter to the British Medical Journal calling on the Government to bring the Regulations to Parliament for a vote before the General Election. (Hopkinson, N. et al. Standardised (“plain”) packaging of cigarette regulations must be passed before the General Election. Letter. BMJ 2014;349:g7751)

The systematic review of the evidence for plain tobacco packaging, commissioned by the Department of Health and carried out by the Public Health Research Consortium concluded that “there is strong evidence to support the propositions set out in the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control relating to the role of plain packaging in helping to reduce smoking rates; that is, that plain packaging would reduce the attractiveness and appeal of tobacco products, it would increase the noticeability and effectiveness of health warnings and messages, and it would reduce the use of design techniques that may mislead consumers about the harmfulness of tobacco products.” [http://phrc.lshtm.ac.uk/project\\_2011-2016\\_006.html](http://phrc.lshtm.ac.uk/project_2011-2016_006.html))

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