



Association of Directors of Public Health (UK)

ADPH welcomes the resounding vote by MPs in favour of standardised packaging for tobacco products

The Association of Directors of Public Health has welcomed the resounding support from MPs for the introduction of standardised packaging for tobacco products – a significant step to protecting the next generation of children and young people from starting to smoke.

ADPH President Dr Janet Atherton said ***“We are extremely pleased that there has been such strong support for introducing 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.”***

It is intended that standardised packaging of tobacco products will be introduced in May 2016 - at the same time as the EU Tobacco Products Directive measures on packaging and labelling come into force, which will increase the size of the health warnings to 65% of the pack and introduce picture warnings on the front of all cigarette and tobacco packs.

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 advice on public health policy. 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.

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)

Following the vote in the Commons the regulations will now pass to the House of Lords, where the vote is expected to take place next week. If passed, the regulations are expected to take effect from May 2016.

Standardised Packaging of Tobacco Products Regulations 2015:

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2015/9780111129876/pdfs/ukdsi_9780111129876_en.pdf

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