

All Party Parliamentary Group on Smoking and Health Press Release

Thursday 3rd April 2014

APPG warmly welcomes Chantler review and urges Government to implement standardised (“plain”) cigarette Packs

Members of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Smoking and Health have warmly welcomed the publication today of Sir Cyril Chantler’s review which concludes that there is a strong public health case for introducing “plain” standardised packaging for tobacco products. [1]

Paul Burstow MP (Liberal Democrat, Chair of the APPG on Smoking and Health) said:

“Sir Cyril’s review has clearly shown that there is a robust case for introducing standardised tobacco packaging. It is particularly encouraging to note that the review has rejected misleading claims by the tobacco industry that the measure would increase illicit tobacco sales. The policy is working well in Australia and we therefore urge the Government to act swiftly to bring forward regulations for standardised packaging in the UK in order to deter another generation of children from starting on the road of addiction and premature death.”

Bob Blackman MP (Conservative, Secretary of the APPG) said:

“This review provides confirmation of the already strong case for removing the last vestiges of marketing from cigarette packs. This is a simple measure that will be easy to introduce and simple to enforce. But the effects will be long-lasting: with fewer children starting to smoke there will be dramatic improvements in public health as well as significant cost savings.”

Kevin Barron MP (Labour, Vice Chair of the APPG) added:

“There is widespread support for standardised tobacco packaging amongst the public as well as across all Parties in Parliament. We all want to see children growing up in an environment free from the insidious marketing practices of the tobacco companies. Standardised tobacco packaging will put an end to the misleading glitzy imagery that children find so attractive. We urge the Government to bring forward regulations for standardised packaging as soon as possible.”

- ENDS -

Notes

[1] Review of the evidence on standardised packaging

<http://www.kcl.ac.uk/health/packaging-review.aspx>

On 28th November 2013, the Government announced that it had appointed the eminent paediatrician Sir Cyril Chantler to conduct an independent review into the public health impact of the standardised packaging of cigarettes and tobacco products. The announcement followed Parliamentary votes to include in the Children and Families Bill powers for the Health Secretary to introduce regulations on standardised packaging in England. The Scottish, Welsh and Northern Ireland Governments have also supported the policy.

Australia was the first country to introduce standardised packaging, in December 2012. Soon after standardised packs began to appear in Australian shops, smokers reported that they found cigarettes from plain packs less appealing or satisfying. Research showed that, compared with smokers who were still using branded packs, the plain pack smokers were 81% more likely to have thought about quitting at least once a day during the previous week and to rate quitting as a higher priority in their lives than smokers using brand packs. There was also a big increase in the number of people contacting smoking quitlines following the introduction of the new packs.