

Bold Khan Review would reduce early deaths and inequality in West Midlands says Action on Smoking and Health

Action on Smoking and Health (ASH) have today (June 9) welcomed Javed Khan's bold plans to make smoking obsolete and urged that there is no time to waste if the Government is to achieve its smokefree 2030 ambition (5% by 2030).

In the 1,053 days [1] that have passed since the Government pledged to make England smokefree, in the West Midlands:

- Around 35,500 people have died from smoking related illness.
- 37,825 children have started smoking.
- Around £4.85bn has been spent on tobacco.

The charity is now calling on Government to publish its long-awaited Tobacco Control Plan by the end of the year and act on the findings of the Khan Review, an independent review, commissioned by the Secretary of State for Health, Sajid Javed.

People in the region also back action with three quarters (75%) [2] of people in the West Midlands backing the Government's ambition to reduce smoking prevalence to less than 5% by 2030.

Deborah Arnott, Chief Executive of ASH, said:

“Javed Khan’s top priority is immediate and substantial increased government funding for tobacco control. He’s absolutely right. England is way behind target on the Government’s smokefree 2030 ambition and while tougher regulations will help, without additional investment we will never get back on track. Every day the Government fails to act more than 200 people in England die from smoking and 280 children under 16 light their first cigarette, two thirds of whom will go on to become addicted smokers. The Secretary of State has said that it is a ‘moral outrage’ that England’s richest people live on average a decade longer than the poorest. The leading cause for this difference is smoking and it’s time for the government to match outrage with action.”

Calls for the publication of the new Tobacco Control Plan by the end of the year, are backed by MPs in the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Smoking and Health. Last year the APPG published its recommendations for a sufficiently funded Tobacco Control Plan, calling on Government to end the tobacco epidemic by 2030.

Bob Blackman MP, Chairman of the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Smoking and Health said:

“As Chairman of the APPG on Smoking and Health, I am delighted to see the publication of Javed Khan’s bold review to make smoking obsolete. It shows a determination to achieve our ambition to be smokefree by 2030, and level up the health of the nation. Now it is time for the Government to deliver a sufficiently funded Tobacco Control Plan containing the actions it knows are needed. My parents lost their lives to this lethal addiction, so this is personal, I don’t want others suffering the way I did.”

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Notes to the Editor

Action on Smoking and Health is a health charity working to eliminate the harm caused by tobacco use. For more information see: www.ash.org.uk/about-ash. ASH receives funding for its programme of work from Cancer Research UK and the British Heart Foundation.

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References

[1] <https://ash.org.uk/ash-local-toolkit/ash-ready-reckoner-2022/>

[2] Online survey by YouGov for ASH. Total sample size was 10,211 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 18th February - 18th March 2021. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all adults in England (aged 18+).