

Tobacco control aspects of the Health Bill – notes for Monday 9th March Committee Stage

Tobacco Point of Sale Displays: The case for protecting children

1. It's about children

- A ban on the display of tobacco products at the point of sale is needed to protect children.
- The younger a person begins smoking, the more addicted they will be and the harder it is to quit.
- 60,000 child smokers are recruited each year; eight out of ten smokers start before the age of 19.¹

2. Display walls are a form of tobacco marketing to young people that must be ended

Professor Gerard Hastings, Director of Cancer Research UK's Centre for Tobacco Control Research, University of Stirling has found that²:

- In 2006, almost half (46%) of UK teens were aware of tobacco marketing at point of sale.
- International evidence suggests that removing packs from sight at point of sale could reduce adolescents' exposure to cigarette brand impressions in stores by as much as 83%.
- The odds of a young person professing an intention to smoke may increase by 35% with every brand that they can name as having seen advertised at point of sale.

3. Putting tobacco products out of sight will reduce youth smoking rates

- Many of the statistics from Canada that have been quoted during the debate on the Health Bill relate to adult smoking rates, not those for Youth. – Please challenge speakers who oppose these measures to clarify if they are quoting rates for adults or children (the figures for youth smoking rates in Canada and Iceland are provided below).
- In Canada where such legislation has now been implemented in nearly all provinces, surveys show that banning point of sale displays, as part of a range of tobacco control measures, has coincided with a fall in smoking prevalence rates amongst 15 to 19 year olds from 22% in 2002 to 15% in 2007.³
- In Iceland, which implemented a tobacco display ban in 2001, a survey of its 10th graders (aged 15-16) shows a significant fall in youth smoking. Smoking prevalence rates amongst 10th graders fell from 18.6% in 1999 (two years prior to the cigarette display ban) to 13.6% in 2003 - twice the rate of decline compared to the previous four year period.⁴

4. Experience suggests that the implementation burden to shops will likely be minimal

- A quote from a Canadian supplier confirmed it will cost as little as £200 to refit a typical small UK shop.⁵
- The systems for covering tobacco displays are very easy to use (see photos for example on left).
- Small shops have adapted to survive despite the long term decline in smoking rates from 45% of the population in 1974 to 20% of the population today.⁶



Source: 4 Solutions Display Corp, Ontario

5. Putting packs out of sight will help existing smokers to quit

- Research shows that just showing a cigarette pack to an addicted smoker can induce a craving.
- Nicotine is as addictive as heroin or cocaine⁷ and it takes on average three to eight attempts to stop smoking.

6. Smuggling and counterfeiting is unlikely to increase

- There is no evidence from countries that have implemented a POS ban that smuggling rates have risen as a result or that people have changed where they buy their tobacco.
- Even counterfeit products cannot be distinguished by sight. Covert marks now exist on all genuine tobacco packs so that trading standards officers can identify counterfeit from genuine.

7. The measures proposed are proportionate to the harm being prevented

- Tobacco is the only product that if used according to the manufacturers instructions will kill one in two long term users.
- Tobacco remains the single largest preventable cause of cancer in the UK and each year smoking-related diseases kill 87,000 people in England alone.

Tobacco control aspects of the Health Bill – notes for Monday 9th March Committee Stage Tobacco Point of Sale Displays: The case for protecting children

8. Removing tobacco displays has not hurt the jurisdictions that have implemented it

- If the removal of point of sale displays had been a disaster in Saskatchewan it would not have been adopted by 11 other Canadian provinces and territories of all political profiles.
- Scotland has announced its intentions to prohibit of point of sale tobacco displays as part of its forthcoming Tobacco Bill. The Northern Ireland Assembly has passed a Legislative Consent Motion to enable it to prohibit tobacco point of sales once the Health Bill has been passed in Westminster.

9. The tobacco industry funds some groups opposed to a ban on point of sale displays

- The Tobacco Manufacturers Association funds the Responsible Retailers, the 'Save our Shop' campaign and the Tobacco Retailers Alliance.

10. The measures must be part of a broader comprehensive strategy

- The full benefit of removal of the display of tobacco products at the point of sale will only be realised if the measures are accompanied by a comprehensive government strategy that includes support for those seeking to quit and other measures.

For more background information or speaking notes please contact Tracey Loftis, Public Affairs Manager at Cancer Research UK at tracey.loftis@cancer.org.uk 020 7061 8524; or Martin Dockrell, Director of Policy and Research at ASH at martin.dockrell@ash.org.uk 020 7739 5902.

¹ Goddard E. (2008). General Household Survey 2006: Smoking and drinking among adults 2006. Office for National Statistics.

² Hastings, G et al. (2008) Point of Sale Display of Tobacco Products. The Centre for Tobacco Control Research, University of Stirling

³ Canadian Tobacco Use Monitoring Survey 2000-2007. http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/tobac-tabac/research-recherche/stat/ctums-esutc_2007-eng.php

⁴ The European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs (ESPAD). www.espad.org/sa/node.asp?node=730

⁵ Quote from 4 Solutions display Corp, Canada. Recommended supplier to Canadian Convenience Stores Association members.

⁶ General Household Survey: Smoking and drinking among adults 2007, Office for National Statistics. 2008.

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_compendia/GHS07/GHSSmokingandDrinkingAmongAdults2007.pdf

⁷ Since 1988, the U.S. Surgeon General, the Royal Society of Canada, and, most recently, the Royal College of Physicians, have all concluded that nicotine is an addictive substance that, in its addiction and withdrawal, displays similarities to such hard drugs as cocaine and heroin. Nicotine meets the criteria that are used to define a drug of addiction or dependence.