

## SFAC welcomes consultation on plain packaging



16 April 2012

The Smokefree Action Coalition - a group of 188 health and welfare organisations [3] - has welcomed the launch today of the Government's consultation on tobacco packaging. [1]

Putting tobacco products in plain packaging is essential because once tobacco is out of sight in shops tobacco packs will be the last remaining promotional tool for the tobacco industry. Also there is good evidence that plain, standardised packs are:

- less attractive, particularly to young people;
- make the health warnings stand out more; and
- reduce the ability of the packaging to mislead consumers about the harms of smoking.

There is already widespread public support for requiring tobacco to be sold in plain standardised packaging with the product name in standard lettering. A recent poll found that overall 62% of adults in England supported this while just 11% opposed the measure. [2]

Deborah Arnott, Chief Executive of ASH, said: "*If we are to succeed in making smoking history for our children then plain packaging is the obvious next step now advertising promotion and sponsorship are banned and tobacco displays in shops are on the way out. Cigarettes are not like sweets or toys and should not be sold in fancy colourful packaging to make them appealing to children. Cigarettes are full of toxins and cause fatal diseases: plain, standardised packaging will make this explicit.*"

Sir Richard Thompson, President of the Royal College of Physicians said: "*From our first report on smoking and health fifty years ago the RCP has strongly supported the implementation of effective and comprehensive strategies to reduce the prevalence of smoking. Plain standardised packaging of tobacco products is the obvious next step - brightly coloured packaging is the major remaining means by which the industry can promote its product to children and young people; it needs to be stopped now.*"

### Notes

[1] The Consultation document is available from the DH website [here](#).

For further information on the case for tobacco plain packaging see: the Smokefree Action Coalition [briefing on plain packaging](#)



[2] YouGov Survey. Total sample size was 10,000 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 27th February to 16th March 2012. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all adults (aged 18+) in England.

Question asked of respondents: The image above is an example of a 'plain standardised pack' based on Australian legislation passed last year (Source: ASH, 2012). Thinking about the packaging above, to what extent would you support or oppose the following? Requiring tobacco to be sold in plain standardised packaging with the product name in standard lettering. Respondents were shown the image on the left.

Australia will be the first country in the world to require plain, standardised packaging for all tobacco products from December 2012. See [Australian Government Notice](#)

[3] The Smokefree Action Coalition is a group of 188 organisations, united in working to reduce the harm caused by tobacco. For the full list of members see the [about section](#) of this website.