

Smith L (Lee-Anne)

01-40

From: Glen J (John)
Sent: 28 February 2007 10:25
To: Smith L (Lee-Anne)
Subject: FW: Consultation Response



TIG Response to
Raising Min Ag...

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-----Original Message-----

From: Connelly, Helena [mailto:helena.connelly@wlt.scot.nhs.uk]
Sent: 28 February 2007 10:14
To: Glen J (John)
Subject: Consultation Response

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John

Please find attached a repose on behalf of west Lothian Tobacco Issues Group

Regards

Helena

<<TIG Response to Raising Min Age.doc>>

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West Lothian Tobacco Issues Group's
Response to Consultation on the Draft Smoking, Health and Social
Care (Scotland) Act 2005 (Variation of Age Limit for Sale of
Tobacco Purchase and Consequential Modifications) Order 2007

Q1: Do you agree that the age of purchase of tobacco products should be raised to 18 as provided for in the draft Order, and with the assumptions made in the partial RIA?

West Lothian Tobacco Issues Group's (TIG) supports the proposal to raise the minimum legal age for purchasing tobacco from 16 to 18. The group welcomes, in particular the intention to do this as part of a wider package of tobacco control measures to reduce the availability and consumption of tobacco among older children and young teenagers.

Our decision to support this draft order has been taken after considering the possible benefits this action may have, namely,

- Raising the purchasing age to 18 will send a clear message to these young people regarding the health risks of tobacco.
- It brings the legal purchasing age for cigarettes into line with the legal purchasing age for alcohol, and as such will convey a consistent message on protecting young people from accessing these products.
- An end to the situation where it was illegal to sell tobacco to those under age but not illegal for the young person to purchase tobacco.

Q2: TIG would also like the following points to be considered as issues, which require to be addressed, in preparation for the proposed change in the legal age for purchase.

- Comprehensive enforcement resources and strategies need to be in place prior to any minimum age increase.
- Adequate resources need to be in place to allow a substantial increase in tobacco education, prevention and cessation services for young people in order to capitalise on the likelihood of reducing smoking prevalence in young people.

Although the ASH/HEBS pilot smoking cessation services for young people in Scotland did not achieve the anticipated outcomes, nevertheless some valuable lessons were learned. TIG would therefore advise that further research is needed and would urge that sufficient time is allowed for any projects to be planned, established and evaluated. The members of TIG are of the opinion that a longer time frame is required before the true effects of these projects are seen and can be fully evaluated.

We would urge the Scottish Executive to support the development of other approaches, which will add to the knowledge base. This will incur significant financial investment however there are many innovative and committed groups and individuals who, given time and adequate resources, can achieve the correct balance of education, prevention and cessation interventions for

young people which will result in a reduction in smoking prevalence in this age group.

TIG has considered the period of time required between the announcement of the change and its implementation.

We would recommend that Option 2, a pre-implementation phase of 6-12 months would be best. This would allow for

- Effective preparations for the legislation change and ensure that adequate enforcement strategies are in place.
- Tobacco education, prevention and cessation services for young people to be established.
- Effective media campaigns to raise awareness of the proposed change to the law, and to raise awareness of the reasons for raising the minimum purchasing age

In adopting this shorter timeframe there is a potential issue for 16-18 year olds who currently smoke legally and for whom buying tobacco would become an offence when legislation is introduced. TIG feels the communities around Scotland are ready to accept a shorter lead in to legislation change. The smoke-free legislation already introduced in Scotland on March 26th 2006 has increased public awareness of the health risks associated with smoking and has been received well by the majority of Scots. TIG anticipates this has not only helped in the reduction of smoking prevalence but also paved the way for other changes in attitudes to smoking in Scotland. It will do this by influencing the social acceptability of smoking as 'the norm' in both adults and young people. This proposed change in raising the minimum legal age for purchasing tobacco from 16 to 18 can only enhance the effects of smokefree legislation.

Nevertheless, while the proposed raising the age from 16 to 18 is welcomed by TIG we feel its beneficial effects would be enhanced if backed up with,

- Mandatory positive licensing of the sale of tobacco.
- Introducing out-of-sight sales for tobacco, ending the consistent sight of branded packets of cigarettes that dominate the till areas of the majority of Scotland's shops.

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