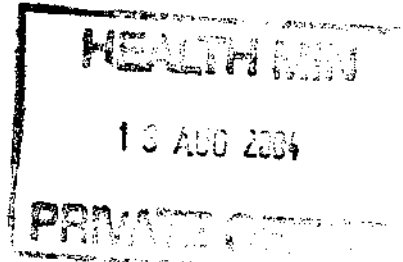


SM/AC

16 AUG '04 11:47

10th August 2004

Mr Tom McCabe MSP
Deputy Minister for Health & Community Care
Scottish Executive
St Andrew's House
Regent Road
EDINBURGH
EH1 3DG



Dear Tom

Consultation Re Smoking In Public Places

In response to the above I detail below comments which I have forwarded to Scottish Executive.

1. Having considered the health risks associated with passive smoking, do you think that further action needs to be taken to reduce people's exposure to second-hand smoke?

When one considers the risk to health caused through passive smoking it is essential that steps are taken to introduce laws to protect the health of the nation.

2. Would you support a law that would make enclosed public places smoke-free? (Public places include workplaces and public transport)

In the absence of law and enforcement over this matter steps to reduce exposure to passive smoking would fail. There is no place for hypocrisy – tobacco is our most lethal drug – if some businesses are prepared to sign up to introduce smoke free places – everyone should – otherwise the Government gives out mixed messages which confuse the public's understanding as to why we must pursue these necessary changes.

3. If a law was introduced, do you think there should be any exemption to it? (i.e. any public places where smoking should be allowed)

By providing exemption to the rule we subject smokers to even more excessively polluted and harmful smoking environments (where potentially large numbers of smokers get together to smoke). People may be tempted to "break the rules" and smoke outwith the exempted place – better to keep the law simple and easily understood by all.

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4. If we decide not to introduce a law, what more could be done to encourage individual businesses to take voluntary action to become smoke-free or to provide more smoke-free provision?

Tax incentives for smoke free workplaces? Variation in business Council tax, rates to encourage employers.

5. What else could we do to reduce people's exposure to second-hand smoke?

Improve ventilation in workplaces – add laws to Government Health & Safety Regulation to ensure adequate ventilation in offices.

6. Please let us know about any other views you have about smoking in public places.

As an organisation involved in delivery of a counselling service for problem drinkers – I believe laws should change to protect public from passive smoking. The links "triggers" associated with alcohol and smoking are often overlooked – our clients frequently report that lighting up a cigarette is frequently a stimulus to drink and vice-versa. For this reason it is vital that changes be implemented in pubs as well as offices and other public places.

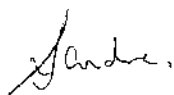
Other Comments

I am firmly of the view that there is a direct link between smoking and consumption of alcohol and that we may learn a great deal from the Salsus Study undertaken in relation to Young People. This piece of research reveals that tobacco, drugs and alcohol are frequently used as gateway drugs to illegal drugs.

If we are to resolve numbers of people who are frequently tempted to smoke, there requires to be changes made in relation to supply and cost of cigarettes. Large numbers of cheap cigarettes are purchased by holidaymakers, oil workers etc who get discounted rates. Smuggling of cigarettes should attract the highest penalties. Cost of cigarettes should continue to become prohibitively expensive.

— I look forward to meeting you soon.

Yours sincerely



Sandra Maguire (Mrs)
Chief Executive