

For attention:
Health, Social Care and Sport Committee
The Scottish Parliament
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Monday 15 January 2024

Dear Convener and Members,

I am writing on behalf of ASH Scotland (Action on Smoking and Health Scotland), the health charity working in and for Scotland to reduce the harms associated with tobacco and related products, to thank you for considering the evidence I provided during the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee's Vaping (Public Health Impact) evidence session on 14 November 2023.

In this letter, I wish to bring recent developments to the Committee's attention and reiterate the urgency in which action must be taken to tackle what leading respiratory paediatricians in Scotland have described as a situation fast becoming a vaping epidemic in the adolescent population.

Having noted the Scottish Statutory Instrument laid before the Scottish Parliament on 11 January 2024 relating to tightening the rules on the advertising and promotions of Nicotine Vaping Products in Scotland which Health (Tobacco, Nicotine etc. and Care) (Scotland) Act 2016 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2016/14/contents/enacted>), ASH Scotland would welcome early introduction of the provisions in Section 17-19 of the 2016 Act which we contend should include strong implementation of regulations restricting or eradicating marketing strategies, advertising displays (including retail and street marketing); brand-sharing; free samples and nominal pricing; as well as sponsorship deals promoting nicotine and non-nicotine e-cigarettes.

I also invite the Committee to also consider the World Health Organization's call to action, backed by a technical evidence note, published on 14 December 2023 that urges urgent and strong decisive action to be taken to prevent the uptake of e-cigarettes, which are harmful to health, to protect children, as well as non-smokers and minimise health harms to the population (<https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/electronic-cigarettes---call-to-action> and <https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/technical-note-on-call-to-action-on-electronic-cigarettes>).

In its call to action, WHO spotlights the concerning rise in children's and youth uptake of e-cigarettes driven by marketing and leading to underage use outstripping adult use in many countries; the mounting evidence of adverse health impacts; and strongly advises against any smoking cessation strategy using commercialised consumer products.

I thank the Committee for consideration of the points raised in this letter.

Yours sincerely,



Sheila Duffy, Chief Executive