

01-15

**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?

Yes

Q2: With this in mind, we would welcome views on:-

Issues which you think require to be addressed in preparation for the proposed change in the legal age for purchase; and

Issues to be addressed

All young people need to have a proof of age and card retailers should (if in any doubt) ask for this routinely. This will require educational/awareness raising work with retailers. The effect on retailers on loss of tobacco sales to young people may have a displacement effect and lead to increased spending on non-tobacco products, but perhaps retailers could also consider selling NRT. Could this be provided at a discounted rate? Trading standards will need to maintain good communications with retailers and it is essential that a robust enforcement protocol forms part of the overall package. Unless the legislation is enforced then it is unlikely to have a significant effect.

Restricting sales of tobacco to young people also needs to cover vending machines and it is important that trading standards monitor the siting of vending machines to ensure they are not accessible to young people (eg in hotel foyers etc). The public awareness raising campaign is essential to success. Educational initiatives targeted at school children are also important and there needs to be a standardised approach across the curriculum.

Help for young people who want to stop smoking is also a very important part of the process, however smoking cessation services for young people are not as fully developed as the adult services and require considerable additional resources. National guidance is also needed around confidentiality and consent issues and on what works best. As things stand, many initiatives have been piloted with young people all over Scotland but not replicated and the effect on quit rates is small. Services need to feel confident that their services for young people are tailored to their target group and as robust as the services currently provided for adult smokers. Although the issue of NRT provision has been addressed through changes to the licensing arrangements by pharmaceutical companies, considerable service development issues need to be addressed.

The fall in tax revenue will, presumably, be offset by reduced costs to the NHS in treating smoking related disease although this will not be obvious in the short-term.

01-15

The period of time required between the announcement of the change and its implementation

A minimum period of 6 months seems sensible, taking into account the support which may be necessary to assist current smokers aged 16 – 17, communications efforts etc.

01-15

REC'd 21/02

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Carolyn Walker, February 2007 on behalf of Fife's Tobacco Issues Group

References

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