

RCGP Response - Standardised packaging for all tobacco products: call for evidence

1. Provide any general points or evidence on standardised packaging of tobacco products. (optional)
Maximum 300 words.

The RCGP believe that standardised packaging of tobacco in itself makes products less appealing and discourages their use. The removal of brand imagery etc. also complements and enhances the effectiveness of health warnings.

[A study](#) found that standardised packaging for tobacco products improved health outcomes, however it is important to note that many tobacco companies have exploited loopholes to continue to promote their products.

Furthermore, [a study](#) exploring consumer responses to standardised packaging in the UK, found that it reduces the appeal of the packaging and smoking, and makes the health warnings more salient. Standardised packaging was also found to deter never or occasional smokers. Similarly, [a study](#) in the UK explored smokers' response to warning salience, appeal, harm, and quit plans, attempts and quitting. The findings indicated that standardised packaging appears to have the intended impacts including, less appealing and perceived as having worse value than a year ago, and smokers were more likely to plan to quit and had made a quit attempt.

2. Provide any international evidence and examples of standardised packaging of tobacco products, cigarette papers and herbal smoking products, and their impact on public health outcomes. (optional)
Maximum 300 words.

The RCGP strongly believe that standardised packaging of tobacco products, cigarette papers and herbal smoking products, enhances awareness of the risks associated with using such products, and reduces the appeal of their use. Additionally, it often prevents initiation and facilitates individuals' efforts to quit the use of these products.

[A study](#) assessing the impact of implementing standardised tobacco packaging on smoking-related behaviors in Singapore found that it was associated with individuals quitting the use of tobacco products, reduced tobacco product appeal, and increased effectiveness of graphic health warnings.

In Mexico, [a study](#) assessing cigarette packaging and labelling policy effects on adolescents found that standardised packaging were perceived as less attractive and appealing to try, and as more harmful when they included large health warning labels. This demonstrates that large health warning labels, along with standardised packaging, reduces the appeal of cigarettes to adolescents. Similarly, in Columbia, [evidence has suggested](#) that standardised cigarette packaging and larger health warnings appear to decrease positive pack perceptions and have the potential to reduce the demand for cigarette products

3. Provide any evidence and examples of pack inserts in the packaging of tobacco products, cigarette papers and herbal smoking products, and their impact on public health outcomes. (optional) *Maximum 300 words.*

The RCGP recognise, the benefits that inserts provide when included within cigarette packs. They highlight the health risks of smoking along with the benefits of quitting or provide guidance on how to do so. They are a cost-effective means of enhancing tobacco control and promoting public health. Additionally, they offer regulators a simple way of supplementing other tobacco control measures.

[Evidence has indicated](#) that tobacco pack inserts can enhance smokers' motivation to quit, given the practical advice and the benefits of cessation they provide. [An evaluation of the mandated pack inserts policy in Canada](#) highlighted that smokers who read these inserts were more likely to make an attempt to quit.

Additionally, [research assessing the perceptions of young adults](#) in the UK, indicated that most smokers would read inserts and believed they are a good way to provide information about quitting. Moreover, the findings suggested that inserts would make them think more about quitting, help if they decided to quit, and thought they are an effective way of encouraging smokers to quit and overall supported having them in all packs.

4. Provide evidence of wider impacts of standardised packaging of tobacco products, cigarette papers and herbal smoking products, such as on the environment, enforcement authorities, illicit trade. (optional) *Maximum 300 words.*

The World Health Organization (WHO) [in their report](#) on the environmental impact of tobacco highlights the issues regarding packaging (which are substantial). In addition to tobacco product waste, there are other waste products associated with tobacco use such as the 2 million tonnes of paper, ink, cellophane, foil and glue that are extremely harmful to the environment.

Studies by [Keep Australia Beautiful](#) (2013) and [Tobacco Control](#) (2015) have found that the amount of tobacco-related litter, including cigarette butts and packaging, remained relatively stable post-implementation, despite the change in packaging.

Specific products

This section is regarding specific products, this is an opportunity to share any evidence on a range of tobacco products and accessories.

5. Do you wish to submit evidence on specific tobacco products?

Yes No