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This newsletter gives a brief update on information and events relating to tobacco control. This edition focuses on the Plain Packaging campaign. If you would like to receive regular copies of this update, please contact me at [lesleythomas@nhs.net](mailto:lesleythomas@nhs.net).

*Lesley Thomas  
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## The Plain Packs Campaign

The Smokefree Devon Alliance is supporting the national campaign for plain cigarette packaging, led by Smokefree South West. In the Spring the government will consult on this issue to gauge public opinion.

The tobacco industry needs to replace its customers that quit or die. Therefore, it looks to young people to fill this gap. The pack branding is the last area on which marketing can take place. The evidence shows that young people are influenced by the colourful branding of packaging as it makes the product more attractive. Take a look at <http://www.plainpacksprotect.co.uk/truth.aspx> to see more.



Dr Virginia Pearson, Director of Public Health at NHS Devon said:-

*“Tobacco packaging is the last legally allowed form of tobacco advertising and is seen on a daily basis by our children and young people. Over 1200 people die from smoking related disease in Devon every year and studies show that glitzy, shiny and colourful packaging is used to recruit the next generation of smokers.”*

To support plain packs and protect the next generation, pledge your support at [www.plainpacksprotect.co.uk](http://www.plainpacksprotect.co.uk). Your pledge will automatically be sent to the government consultation when it launches. You will also be directed to a further web opportunity to email your MP and show your support to him if you wish.

There are planned roadshows across Devon on 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> May. If you would like to get involved please contact Lesley Thomas on [lesleythomas@nhs.net](mailto:lesleythomas@nhs.net).

Australia has already legislated on this issue and from December 2012 all tobacco products will have to be sold in branding-free olive green packaging, with plain typeface and large, graphic health warnings..

There are many elements to this campaign including:-

- Billboards
- Digital ads
- Posters and leaflets
- A viral video on YouTube
- Videos of the public and their reactions
- Presentations in ppt format
- Website with information and a sign up facility.



The viral film exposes the truth behind Big Tobacco's arguments against plain packaging and can be viewed at:-

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=00OuRshZMME&feature=youtu.be>.

Or, to see the public's reaction to glitzy packaging follow this link:-

[http://www.youtube.com/user/plainpacks?ob=0&feature=results\\_main](http://www.youtube.com/user/plainpacks?ob=0&feature=results_main).

If you are able to display posters and leaflets for the public, please do get in touch with Lesley Thomas at [lesleythomas@nhs.net](mailto:lesleythomas@nhs.net).

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## CutFilms



In order to engage young people on the Plain Packaging issue, Cut Films have teamed with Smokefree South West in a short-film competition. The competition allows young people to upload their own films about tobacco-related subjects and includes prizes such as; film work shops for schools and a mix of trips and gadgets for those that make the top ten! There will also be a showcase of the most nominated films with a red carpet event ... venue TBC!

Not only can young people enter the competition but those that work with young people can access Lesson Plans, Posters and a series of Short Films available to use as a complete resource.

Entrants can be via a school, youth club or group of friends. You can use a mobile phone, camera or video camera. All the software to edit the film is available online and can be accessed for free on the Cut Films Website. Please visit the website for further information about how to enter! <http://www.cutfilms.org/plainpacks>

Start uploading films on the 27<sup>th</sup> Feb 2012. Closing date is 20<sup>th</sup> April for the south west round but entries after that date still go forward to the national competition.

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## No Smoking Day 2012

No Smoking Day is Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2012. Information is available through all Devon GP surgeries and pharmacies on where to quit smoking locally using NHS Stop Smoking Services. Using NHS support and stop smoking medication means the smoker is four times more likely to quit than going it alone. See link below.

[www.nosmokingday.org.uk](http://www.nosmokingday.org.uk)



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## Tobacco Displays in Supermarkets to end



Large shops will no longer be able to display tobacco products to the public from 6 April 2012. Customers will still be able to buy cigarettes in the usual way but the Government is ending tobacco displays to protect young people who are often the target of tobacco promotion. Ending open cigarette displays will help people trying to quit smoking and help to change attitudes and social norms around smoking.

The tobacco display provisions in the Health Act 2009 and related regulation will be implemented for large shops from April 2012 and for all other shops from April 2015.

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## Smoking in Cars

The British Medical Association has called for a ban on smoking in cars in the UK to protect people from second-hand smoke. It reviewed the evidence of the dangers and highlighted research showing the levels of toxins in a car can be up to 23 times higher than in a smoky bar. Such a ban would particularly benefit children. The young are particularly vulnerable from second-hand smoke as they absorb more pollutants and their immune systems are less developed. Some 300,000 children have to see their GP every year with smoking related

problems which can be anything from chronic asthma to sudden infant death syndrome. In the longer term, children exposed to high levels of smoke are more likely to suffer life-threatening illnesses such as emphysema and lung cancer.

The Department of Health launches its national Smokefree Homes and Cars campaign on 31 March 2012. The campaign will run for an 8 week period across TV, Radio, Press and Online. They will be supporting local areas to work in partnership to encourage smokers to change their behaviour.

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## Young People

NHS Devon is inviting expressions of interest for schools in the South of the county to take part in the ASSIST programme from September 2012. This is a peer-led programme delivered to year 8 pupils that is shown to effectively reduce the uptake of smoking.

A social marketing project has also been commissioned that will engage young people in Devon through social media to denormalise smoking. This project is expected to be completed by summer 2012.

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## National News round up

### Public Health Outcomes Framework

The Public Health Outcomes Framework was announced in January. The framework concentrates on two high-level outcomes to be achieved across the public health system. These are:

- increased healthy life expectancy
- reduced differences in life expectancy and healthy life expectancy between communities

Since tobacco is the biggest contributor to the difference in health inequalities it remains a primary concern.

See link for more information. <http://www.dh.gov.uk/health/2012/01/public-health-outcomes/>

### Electronic cigarette explodes in man's mouth

A faulty battery caused an electronic cigarette to explode in a Florida's man's mouth, taking out some of his front teeth and a chunk of his tongue and severely burning his face, fire officials reported. Electronic cigarettes are not tobacco products, although they are designed to look and feel like conventional cigarettes. A typical e-cigarette consists of three components: a battery, an atomiser and a cartridge containing nicotine. Currently, e-cigarettes are subject to general consumer protection laws and it is the responsibility of trading standards officers to rule on their safety in England.

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For more information on the work of the Smokefree Devon Alliance contact:

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