

LC Paper No. CB(2)584/16-17(13)

Chairperson of Panel on Health Services
Attn: Clerk to Panel on Health Services
Legislative Council Secretariat
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road Central
Hong Kong

Dear Chairperson,

Ref: LegCo Meeting on Amendment of Pictorial Health Warnings

The Health Education and Health Promotion Foundation founded in 1999 with a mission of enhancing health education and health promotion through training, education, research and service. One of our objectives is to work collaboratively with other institutions, professional bodies and persons on the health education and health promotion matters. In supporting Hong Kong Council on Smoking and Health (COSH) on her work on strengthening the tobacco control policies through advocating the Government, I am submitting my views on amendment of pictorial health warnings and have expressed my interest to make an oral presentation in the public hearing for the Panel on Health Services on 17 January 2017.

By 2020, the tobacco epidemic is expected to kill more people than any single disease. Since the middle of the twentieth century, tobacco products have killed more than 60 million people in developed countries alone. Based on current trends, it is estimated that half a billion people now alive will be killed by tobacco products. Tobacco is a known or probable cause of about 25 diseases including cancers at other sites, heart disease, stroke, emphysema and other chronic lung diseases.

Breathing Environmental Tobacco Smoke (ETS) (i.e. side-stream and exhaled smoke from cigarettes, cigars and pipes) causes serious health problems. ETS can aggravate allergies and increase the severity of symptoms in children and adolescents with asthma and heart disease; it is also associated with lung cancer because ETS contains essentially the same cancer-causing substances and toxic agents that are inhaled by the smoker. Tobacco advertising plays a key role in encouraging young people to smoke. In countries around the world, billions of dollars are being spent on sophisticated tobacco advertising and promotions.

The 2011 final issue of journal of Royal Society of Public Health, 'Public Health' has devoted the whole issue to discuss the legislative approaches to preventing and treating cancer. The editorial of that issue has highlighted the High-level meeting of UN General Assembly on prevention of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in 2011 and this declaration was only second declaration on health issue (first being on AIDs) and the key agenda was to implement cost-effective, multi-sectoral population wide interventions to reduce the impact of NCDs risk factors such as smoking, harmful use of alcohol through the implementation of international agreements and strategies, and education, legislative, regulatory and fiscal measures. World Health Organization has also stated in 'Health in 2015: from MDGs to SDGs' that many risk factors for

NCDs are related to the air pollution (also ETS), unhealthy eating habit and physical inactivity. In UK, the implementation of smoking bans had led many legislators to turn to their public health advisors to ask “What is next?”. These legislators had appreciated or realized the potential of health improvement intervention at population level so they could support legislation for public health such as smoking ban.

Our Honorable members of Legislative Council should definitely ask our public health officials “What is next?” after reviewing the evidence of detrimental effect of tobacco use and evidence summarized by the Government paper on effectiveness of decreasing prevalence of smoking with increasing health warning and health messages and listing the content of nicotine and tar. “What is next” is to pass the proposed amendment with no further delay to be accountable to protect health of our population.

Thank you for your kind attention.

Sincerely yours,



Amelia Lo Siu Chee

Vice-president

The Health Education and Health Promotion Foundation

Correspondence Address: P.O. Box 8593, General Post Office, Hong Kong

Email: amelialo@cuhk.edu.hk

Tel: 2693 3708

Fax: 2694 0004