



Care For Your Heart endorses the Government's proposal to amend the health warnings on Tobacco Product Packets and Retail Containers

Care For Your Heart - Cardiac Patients Mutual Support Association (CFYH) supports the amendments to the Smoking Ordinance regarding the health warnings on Tobacco Product Packets and Retail Containers proposed by the Government.

Tobacco use as health hazard has been well recognized for decades. According to the Thematic Household Survey Report No. 59 released by Census and Statistics Department on 4 February 2016, there were about 691,600 smokers in Hong Kong¹. Cigarette smoking narrows blood vessel walls and damages heart. Cigarette and tobacco smoking is a major independent risk factor of cardiovascular diseases and leading avoidable cause of death. Smoking increases the risk of suffering from coronary heart disease by 2-4 times².

However, cigarette manufacturers and tobacco companies deliberately use cigarette packing as an advertising medium to market their products by making it more attractive and appealing to their target groups, especially kids and adolescents. There is a need to strictly regulate the cigarette packaging and limit the use of logos, brand imagery and advertising text on the tobacco products.

Therefore, CFYH endorses the 85% proposal and urges the Government to strengthen the regulation on cigarette packaging by enlarging the size of pictorial health warnings, updating the layout design of the health warnings and expanding the numbers of forms of these health cautions. CFYH is also in support of the inclusion of Department of Health's Quitline (1833 183) and the health message of "QUIT SMOKING FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS" in the health warning to encourage smokers to quit their smoking habits, as well as recommend the Government to introduce plain packaging so as to fade the advertising effect of the cigarette packaging and discourage youngsters from smoking by reducing the attractiveness of the tobacco products.

Apart from amendments on smoking ordinance, CFYH also advises the Government to develop comprehensive tobacco control measures. For examples, establishing more quitting assistance system to aid in smoking cessation, expanding resources for anti-smoking promotion and smoking cessation services to decrease the prevalence of smoking in Hong Kong and keep people away from the adverse consequences of tobacco use.

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¹ Thematic Household Survey Report No.59, Census and Statistics Department, HKSAR

² Smoking & Tobacco Use, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention