



Home Office

Home Secretary

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Professor Les Iversen  
Chairman, Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD)  
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4 July 2013

*Dear Professor Iversen*

I am grateful to the Advisory Council for its further advice, *Consideration of the use of foil as an intervention to support recovery*, which supplements its previous advice on this matter.

The Government's 2010 Drug Strategy, *Reducing demand, restricting supply, building recovery: supporting people to live a drug-free life* is ambitious in its aims and takes a balanced approach. At its core is recovery – enabling individuals to live free from drug dependency, enabling them to re-build their lives and address the criminality and health issues associated with drug abuse.

The Government is working to provide local communities the freedom, responsibility and funding to develop their own ways of improving public health locally, including action to reduce drug and alcohol use and support those recovering from dependence. Public Health England will support this work and endeavour further to disseminate useful information and push innovation in these areas. There are promising signs that our approach is working with continuing, positive trends such as the record numbers of people in England who are completing their treatment free from dependence.

However, we are not complacent. We want to maximise the opportunities to get individuals into treatment in the first place.

Two factors were key to my consideration of the ACMD's advice. Firstly, the ACMD advise that there is no evidence that the provision of foil will encourage drug use. Secondly, that the available evidence shows that it can support an individual in their first steps into treatment and towards recovery and abstinence. I also acknowledge the immediate health benefits. The ACMD also spoke of the significant risks, including the transmission of blood borne viruses, associated with injecting.

I have therefore decided to accept the ACMD's advice and its suggestion that the lawful provision of foil should be confined to the drug treatment context. The legislation that I will now introduce will set strict conditionality to ensure that foil is only given by drug treatment providers as part of structured efforts to get individuals off drugs, whether for the purpose of getting them into treatment in the first place, or into the initial stages of their treatment and recovery plan. We will also put in place mechanisms to carefully monitor the take-up, implementation and adherence to the conditionality over the next year.

This move supports the Government's ambitions not only to tackle the harms caused by drug misuse but to get more people into treatment and off drugs for their own benefit and that of their families and our communities.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State for Health.

*Yours sincerely*

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Th. May', written in a cursive style.

**The Rt Hon Theresa May MP**