

Our ref: TO00000737199

Richmond House  
79 Whitehall  
London  
SW1A 2NS

Tel: 020 7210 4850

Mr Suleman Khonat  
North West Spokesman  
Tobacco Retail Alliance  
PO Box 61705  
London SW1H 0XS

26 NOV 2012

Dear Mr Khonat,

Thank you for your letter of 1 November to Jeremy Hunt about cigarette packaging. I have been asked to reply on Mr Hunt's behalf.

As you will be aware, the UK-wide *Consultation on the standardised packaging of tobacco products* ran from 16 April to 10 August. The consultation has now closed and the Department is carefully considering all the responses that have been received.

Ministers want to make it easier for people to make healthy choices. To do this, the Department needs to understand whether there is evidence to demonstrate that the plain packaging of tobacco products would have an additional health benefit, over and above existing tobacco control initiatives. The consultation asked whether standardised packaging could improve public health by:

- reducing the appeal of tobacco products to consumers;
- increasing the effectiveness of health warnings on the packaging of tobacco products;
- reducing the ability of tobacco packaging to mislead consumers about the harmful effects of smoking; and
- having a positive effect on smoking-related attitudes, beliefs, intentions and behaviours, particularly among children and young people.

To inform responses to this consultation and any subsequent policy-making, the Department commissioned *Plain tobacco packaging: A systematic review*. The review was supported through the Public Health Research Consortium (PHRC), a network of researchers funded by the Department's Policy Research Programme. The review was undertaken by academics at the University of Stirling, the University of Nottingham and the Institute of Education, London.