

Tobacco21 Alliance

Stephen Donnelly TD,
Minister for Health,
Department of Health,
Block 1, Miesian Plaza,
50 – 58 Lower Baggot Street,
Dublin 2,
D02 XW14



10/04/2024

Re: Tobacco 21 Alliance support

Dear Minister Donnelly,

The Tobacco 21 Alliance strongly welcomes the comments you made at the 20th anniversary workplace smoking ban event where you indicated you would be in favour of increasing the legal age of sale of all tobacco products from 18 to 21.

As you stated, raising the legal age to 21 would make it harder for teenagers and adolescents to access tobacco products, deter them from ever initiating, and protect them from a lifetime of smoking. It would be a landmark public health measure.

In 2021, our alliance of health and youth organisations came together to campaign for Ireland to become the first country in the EU to implement Tobacco 21. As seen below, the alliance comprises the Irish Heart Foundation, ASH Ireland Council of the Irish Heart Foundation, Foróige, the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland, the HSE Tobacco Free Ireland Programme, the Asthma Society of Ireland, COPD Support Ireland, the Irish Thoracic Society, the Association of Public Health Medicine Registrars Ireland, the Environmental Health Association of Ireland, the Irish Cancer Prevention Network (Irish Cancer Society, Marie Keating Foundation, National Cancer Control Programme, National Cancer Screening Service, Breakthrough Cancer Research), and finally the Comhairle na nÓg Youth Councils of Limerick, Fingal, Kildare, Wicklow, Roscommon, Donegal, and Kerry.

We were very encouraged to see the recent public consultation on Further Regulation of Tobacco and Nicotine Inhaling Products which you oversaw. One of the many measures it considered to denormalise smoking and protect public health was raising the legal age of smoking to 21. In that regard, the 20th anniversary of the workplace smoking ban presents us with a unique opportunity to reposition Ireland as a leader in tobacco control by implementing Tobacco 21.

The Tobacco 21 Alliance fully supports you and the government in amending legislation to raise the legal age of tobacco products from 18 to 21. We will champion this cause wholeheartedly and are available at any time to discuss any practical support we can provide with you or your officials.

Thanks for your attention and we look forward to hearing from you.

Yours Sincerely,

Members of the Tobacco 21 Alliance

Chris Macey
Director of Advocacy,
Irish Heart Foundation

Prof Des Cox, Chair of the Policy Group
on Tobacco at the Royal College of
Physicians of Ireland

Dr Paul Kavanagh
Consultant in Public Health Medicine
HSE Tobacco Free Ireland Programme

Prof. Emmet O'Brien
Chairperson, ASH Ireland, Council of
the Irish Heart Foundation

Eilís Ní Chaithnía
Chief Executive Officer,
Asthma Society of Ireland

Seán Campbell
CEO Foróige

Dr Caroline Mason Mohan
Director of Public Health
National Screening Service

Liz Yeates
CEO
Marie Keating Foundation

Orla Dolan
Chief Executive Officer, Breakthrough
Cancer Research

Kevin O'Hagan | Cancer Prevention
Manager Irish Cancer Society

Dr Caitríona McCarthy
Consultant in Public Health Medicine,
National Cancer Control Programme

Professor Marcus Kennedy,
President,
Irish Thoracic Society

Damien Lynch
Chairman, EHAI

Tobacco 21 Alliance members

Irish Heart Foundation
Royal College of Physicians Ireland
Comhairle na nÓg Youth Councils
ASH Ireland, Council of the Irish Heart Foundation
Environmental Health Association of Ireland
COPD Support Ireland
Irish Thoracic Society
Association of Public Health Medicine Registrars in Ireland

Foróige
HSE Tobacco Free Ireland Programme
Asthma Society of Ireland
Irish Cancer Prevention Network
Irish Cancer Society
Marie Keating Foundation
National Cancer Control Programme
National Screening Service
Breakthrough Cancer Research



For further information, contact:

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