



TO: Chair and Members of the Board of Health

FROM: Dr. Alexander Summers, Medical Officer of Health
Emily Williams, Chief Executive Officer

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FEEDBACK ON PROPOSED TOBACCO PRODUCT LABELLING REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE *TOBACCO AND VAPING PRODUCTS ACT*

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Health receive Report No. 51-22, re: “Feedback on Proposed Tobacco Product Labelling Requirements Under the Tobacco and Vaping Products Act” for information.

Key Points

- On June 11, 2022, Health Canada opened a [public consultation](#) to invite feedback on the proposed *Regulations Amending the Tobacco Products Regulations (Plain and Standardized Appearance)* and *Order Amending Schedule 1 to the Tobacco and Vaping Products Act*, which closed on August 25, 2022.
- The proposed amendments to regulation would strengthen and update current health-related messages, extend labelling requirements to all tobacco product packages, implement periodic rotation of messages, and introduce text health warnings on individual cigarettes, little cigars with filters (cigarillos) and tubes.
- Health Unit staff, in partnership with staff from other member health units of the Southwest Tobacco Control Area Network (SWTCAN), prepared and submitted feedback to Health Canada, attached as [Appendix A](#).

Consultation on Proposed Tobacco Product Labelling Requirements

On June 11, proposed regulations to amend the *Tobacco Products Regulations (Plain and Standardized Appearance)* and Schedule 1 to the *Tobacco and Vaping Products Act* and corresponding [Regulatory Impact Analysis Statement](#) were published in Canada Gazette, Part I. This publication opened a 75-day consultation period that closed on August 25, 2022. The proposal, if enacted, would require the following ([Health Canada, 2022](#)):

1. The introduction of written health warnings printed on individual cigarettes, cigars that have a filter, and cigarette tubes, to inform users, particularly young persons, who may not be exposed to the packaging, of the health hazards of tobacco use.
2. Renewed health-related messages to address the latest evidence (health warnings, health information messages and toxicity information statements).
3. Health warning and toxicity information requirements extended to all tobacco product packaging.
4. A minimum size of 75% of the main panels of the packaging for health warnings for all tobacco products.
5. A new location for the health information messages on cigarette packages to make these messages more noticeable.

6. A rotation scheme that aims to enhance the novelty and relevance of the messages on tobacco products and packages by rotating sets of messages on a pre-determined schedule.
7. The ability to update the content of health-related messages (such as images or text) to reflect the most up to date science and research available without updating the regulations.

Opportunity for Canada to Set Global Precedence with Health Warning Regulations

Health warnings on the packaging of commercial tobacco products have proven to be an effective way to reach those individuals who smoke. Canada was the first country to require pictorial warnings on tobacco packaging in 2001 which created a positive, health protective ripple effect globally. Canada's innovative approach to health warning communication resulted in more than 130 countries and territories taking similar action, requiring pictorial warnings on tobacco product packages. By enacting the proposed changes, Canada would become the first country to require warnings directly on individual tobacco products (e.g. individual cigarettes, cigarillos and tubes), which would be precedent setting, and could act as a global impetus for other countries to follow Canada's lead. Updated health warnings on individual cigarettes have the potential to reach vulnerable groups, such as youth, young adults, or occasional smokers, who may only access single cigarettes through social supply, while further reducing the consumer appeal of tobacco products. The warnings on individual cigarettes, cigarillos and tubes complements the health warnings seen on external packaging with the potential for significant reach; it is estimated that approximately 20 billion cigarettes are sold annually in Canada. For health warnings to have the intended health protective effect, messages must be refreshed frequently. Health Canada's proposal also includes a proposed rotation or set schedule of updated health warnings to help maintain novelty, relevance and visibility.

Introducing the measures outlined in Option 3 of Health Canada's proposal is an important next step to help reach Canada's Tobacco Strategy target of less than 5% tobacco use by 2035. To communicate its collective support for the proposed regulations, Health Unit staff, in partnership with staff from the other member health units in the Southwest Tobacco Control Area Network prepared and submitted feedback, attached as [Appendix A](#).

This report was submitted by the Healthy Living Division.



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