



SMOKING KILLS

A White Paper on Tobacco.





Smoking kills

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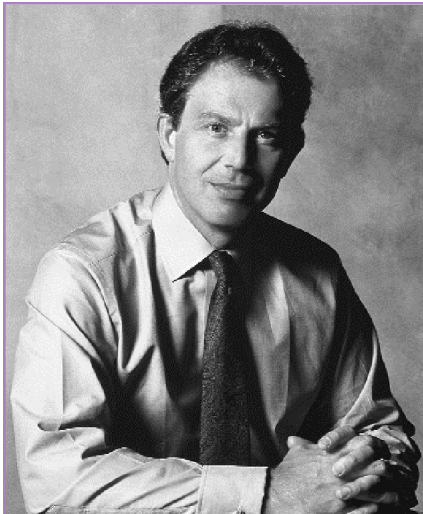
Presented to Parliament by the
Secretary of State for Health, and the Secretaries of State
for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland
by Command of Her Majesty

December 1998

Contents

<i>Chapter</i>	<i>page</i>
Preface	1
Foreword	2
1 Smoking kills	3
<i>The facts</i>	
<i>The risks</i>	
<i>Passive smoking</i>	
<i>Smoking and inequalities</i>	
<i>The cost</i>	
<i>Government action</i>	
2 Government action	13
<i>Tobacco summit</i>	
<i>Advertising</i>	
<i>Tax</i>	
3 Smoking and young people	19
<i>Tobacco advertising in shops</i>	
<i>Enforcement of under age sales</i>	
<i>Proof-of-age card</i>	
<i>Cigarette vending machines</i>	
4 Smoking and adults	33
<i>NHS smoking cessation services</i>	
<i>NRT on the NHS</i>	
5 Smoking and pregnant women	43
6 Smoking: action for everyone	47
<i>Ending tobacco advertising</i>	
<i>Changing attitudes</i>	
<i>Anti-smuggling drive</i>	
<i>Research</i>	
7 Clean air	65
<i>Passive smoking</i>	
<i>Smoking in public places</i>	
<i>Smoking at work</i>	
<i>Government offices</i>	
8 Smoking and international action	75
<i>European action</i>	
<i>Worldwide action</i>	
9 Judging success	81
<i>Targets</i>	
10 Conclusions	85
<i>Milestones</i>	
Joined-up government	90
Who we have consulted	91
References	95

Preface



In Britain today, more than 120,000 people are going to die over the next year from illnesses directly related to smoking. And the year after that, and the year after that. Unless we all do something.

I know these are statistics - sometimes hard to grasp and all too often too easy to dismiss. But they are powerful figures: each one is a testimony to individual and family suffering which need not happen. This appalling waste of people's lives, and the untold story behind it of misery and distress from cancer and heart disease, is wholly preventable. If people chose to stop smoking, they would live longer. Smoking kills.

Yet we recognise that people have a choice. We would like them to stop smoking, and to choose life. The detailed proposals set out in this White Paper, the first-ever in this country on smoking, will help them to make that choice. I reject completely that this is the so-called nanny state in action. It is instead the Government meeting what are clearly its responsibilities. Smokers have rights. So do non-smokers. Both have responsibilities - to themselves, to each other, to their families, and to the wider community. The Government too has responsibilities. Meeting them is what we were elected to do, and what we are determined to do. This White Paper on tobacco is a key part of keeping that promise. It is an important move which I believe will be a significant step towards achieving our goal of improving public health for all the people of Britain.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tony Blair". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

The Rt Hon Tony Blair MP
Prime Minister

Foreword

Smoking kills. That has been known for years. That is why a lot of adults have given up smoking. But the number of adults who smoke has stopped falling. Worse still the number of children who smoke is going up, with more girls than boys taking up this deadly habit.

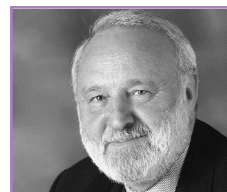
Smoking is now the principal avoidable cause of premature deaths in the UK. It hits the worst off people hardest of all. It harms people who do not smoke. It harms babies in the womb. That is why the Government is determined to turn things round. We want to help existing smokers quit the habit and help children and young people not to get addicted in the first place.

These objectives can only be achieved by a concerted campaign to reduce smoking. That is why this White Paper spells out a package of measures each of which will add to the impact of the others. A major part of the effort will be targeted on children.

As a result of this Government taking a positive position, a Europe wide ban on tobacco advertising and sponsorship is being introduced. This will be backed up by a powerful £50 million publicity campaign to shift attitudes and change behaviour. In collaboration with the Government, the hospitality industry will put in place measures to reduce the amount of smoking in public places. The Health and Safety Commission will be consulting on a new code of practice to protect people from other people's tobacco smoke at their place of work.

The White Paper also sets out our proposals to help the 7 out of every 10 smokers who say they want to quit. We are to invest up to £60 million to build the first ever comprehensive NHS service to help smokers to give up. This will be started first in those deprived communities which in England we have designated as Health Action Zones. The extra help, including nicotine replacement therapy, will be targeted at the worst off, who are most likely to smoke and least able to afford it.

This White Paper spells out a balanced package of measures which we are convinced will command public support and reduce the 120,000 deaths presently caused by smoking every year.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Frank Dobson'.

The Rt Hon Frank Dobson MP
Secretary of State for Health



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Donald Dewar'.

The Rt Hon Donald Dewar MP
Secretary of State for Scotland



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Marjorie Mowlam'.

The Rt Hon Marjorie Mowlam MP
Secretary of State for Northern Ireland



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alun Michael'.

The Rt Hon Alun Michael MP
Secretary of State for Wales