



## REVIEW OF STANDARDISED TOBACCO PACKAGING

*April 2014*

The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow is fully supportive of the plan to move towards plain packaging of cigarettes. This has already been passed by the Scottish Parliament and now is receiving support from the UK Government. The College has written to the UK Government expressing support for this. In that statement, we pointed out the appalling figures of the number of young people who commence smoking in the United Kingdom every year and how this is linked to the attractiveness of cigarette packaging. We also pointed out that 70% of current smokers continue to smoke despite wanting to quit.

Nicotine is a powerful addictive habit and the younger this addiction is established, the more difficult it will be to deal with it in later life. Anything which reduces the number of young smokers and, indeed, the number of smokers at any age, is to be commended and this is another step in the right direction.

It is interesting to reflect on the fact that almost 90 years ago, a thoracic surgeon in the United States pointed out a link between lung cancer and cigarette smoking and was vilified for doing so by the tobacco barons in the United States. The tobacco lobby within the United Kingdom remains powerful and this College has emphasised that the legislation must not be blocked as a consequence of vested interests of the tobacco industry.