

Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit Media Release

May 26, 2016



World No Tobacco Day Goes Plain

May 31st is World No Tobacco Day! This year's theme is "Plain and Standardized Packaging" for tobacco products. Many Canadians may not be aware of how much product promotion and marketing goes into pack design for cigarettes and other tobacco products. The tobacco industry, however, is critically aware how valuable the pack is for both recruiting new smokers and keeping brand loyalty among current smokers. Currently tobacco companies are manipulating pack size, shape and colour to minimize the health warnings as well as to target particular groups. Some cigarettes mimic cosmetics and come in sleek, iridescent packages. Other packs feature fold out marketing materials or attractive 'inner' packs that encourage the user to discard the outside portion with the vital health warnings. Considering that tobacco products are the only legal product that, when used as directed, kills 50% of users prematurely, the pack needs to reflect the toxic product inside.

Plain and Standard Packaging would ensure that all packs are the same size, same shape and same colour. Brand name would be printed in a plain font and there would be no brand colours or logos permitted. This has been done in several other countries and is reflected in Canada's commitment to the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. These measures will reduce the attractiveness of the deadly product inside, stop the tobacco companies from advertising through the pack and increase the effectiveness of the health warning.

The Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit supports Plain and Standardized Packaging. The Federal Health Minister has stated it is a top priority for this government. Canada is ready to join other jurisdictions like Australia, the UK, France and Ireland in implementing Plain and Standardized packaging for tobacco products.

Look for banners around your community on World No Tobacco Day and visit www.freezetheindustry.com for more information.

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