

Research Summary

What other measures should we consider ?

1. Hoek, J., Hoek-Sims, A., & Gendall, P. (2013). [A qualitative exploration of young adult smokers' responses to novel tobacco warnings](#). BMC Public Health, 13(609). doi: 4374126090846971

What did we do and find?

In a series of 17 in-depth interviews, we explored participants' perceptions of current warnings as well as novel warnings representing short-term health consequences; immediate social risks, and tobacco's toxicity (de-normalising tobacco as an everyday product). Participants considered the immediate social and physiological benefits they gained from smoking outweighed far-off risks shown in health warnings, which they regarded as improbable and irrelevant. Of the novel warnings, those presenting immediate social risks altered the balance of gains and losses young adults associated with smoking; however, those presenting short-term health risks or depicting tobacco as a toxin were less effective.

What else should we consider?

Plain packaging offers an opportunity to consider new warning messages. We need to push cessation back to an earlier age and should consider warnings featuring social risks likely to occur in the short term, which participants regarded as more salient and were less likely to rationalise as irrelevant. Social risk messages merit further investigation to examine their potential as a complement to traditional health warnings.

Key Quotes

"...warnings presenting social risks undermined the identity participants sought and the benefits they hope to derive from smoking, and suggest temporal relocation of risk outcomes has potential to challenge young adult smokers' self-exempting beliefs.

Social smokers were more responsive than daily smokers to messages that challenged their temporal perspectives, particularly those focussing on smoking's unpleasant smell. These messages elicited less rationalising and rejection than health or poison messages, and were more likely to stimulate cessation-related thoughts.