3rd December 2007

Dear [Director of Public Health]

Smoking and Local Area Agreements

Implementation of the smokefree legislation and the increase in the age of sale of tobacco have demonstrated how effectively Local Authorities and Primary Care Trusts can work together to reduce smoking prevalence and exposure to secondhand smoke. We believe that much more can now be done to ensure that effective tobacco control measures are implemented at local level, through the new arrangements for Local Area Agreements.

As you will be aware, from April 2008 every Local Authority will have to report on each of the 198 performance indicators published in October 2007.[1] For their new Local Area Agreements they will also have to choose, from this set of national indicators, up to 35 stretch targets plus 17 targets for Children and Young People. These will have to be negotiated with the other agencies in the Local Strategic Partnership.

The Faculty of Public Health and Association of Directors of Public Health are writing to you in collaboration with the Health and Trading Standards Institute and the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health to highlight National Indicator 123: the current smoking rate prevalence of the population aged 16 years and over.

We wish to encourage you to take the following action, subject to local priorities:

1. To ensure that all activities which help reduce the prevalence of smoking are recorded against the PI 123.

2. To seek to include within the targets for the Local Area Agreement a stretch target for reducing the prevalence of smoking. Smoking is known to be responsible for over half the differences in life expectancy between the highest and lowest socioeconomic groups in this country.

We have attached to this letter a document produced by the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health and Action on Smoking and Health setting out some of the key points which may assist you in making the case.

Yours sincerely,

Tim Crayford
President
Association of Directors of Public Health

Alan Maryon-Davis,
President
Faculty of Public Health

[1] The New Performance Framework for Local Authorities & Local Authority Partnerships. DCLG London, October 2007.

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