



Department  
of Health &  
Social Care

*From the Chief Medical Officer  
Professor Chris Whitty KCB FRS FMedSci*

Professor Katie Morris  
British Maternal & Fetal Medicine Society

*Sent by email*

5 October 2023

Dear Professor Morris

**RE: Smoking measures**

As you know, smoking is a major cause of preventable death, disability and ill health resulting in 64,000 deaths a year in England. This is true across all medical specialities. Over 80% of smokers started before the age of 20.

Smoking in pregnancy is associated with a higher risk of miscarriage, premature birth, stillbirth and having a low birth weight baby.

Yesterday the Government announced plans to create the first smokefree generation. Children who turned or are turning 14 this year or younger will never be legally sold tobacco products, effectively raise the age of sale by one year each year for this generation. More details can be found in the Command Paper published here: [Stopping the start: our new plan to create a smokefree generation - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/command-papers/stopping-the-start-our-new-plan-to-create-a-smokefree-generation)

In addition to stopping people starting, there will be more support to help current smokers quit. Local stop smoking services will have their allocated funding more than doubled and there will be additional funds for awareness campaigns to encourage people to quit. There will also be a consultation on new regulations to reduce the appeal and availability of vapes to children.

These measures, if approved by Parliament, would be a major step forward for public health, significantly improve the clinical outcomes of patients and reduce the pressures on the health and social care system from smoking related illness.

I hope the British Maternal & Fetal Medicine Society and your members will contribute to the public debate.

Yours sincerely

**PROFESSOR CHRIS WHITTY**