



PICTORIAL HEALTH WARNING (PHWs) IMPLEMENTATION ON TOBACCO AND TOBACCO PRODUCTS PACKAGES

In pursuance of the Part Six (Tobacco Control Measures) of the Public Health Act, 2012 (ACT 851) and the Tobacco Control Regulations, 2016 (L.I.2247), FDA is mandated to implement, enforce and regulate tobacco and tobacco products.

The subsection 63 of the Act 851 and subsections 10 &11 of the L.I.2247 specifically gives vivid descriptions of the detailed requirements of the Health warnings on tobacco and tobacco packages.

In the quest for regulating tobacco products and reducing the epidemic of tobacco use, the labelling of tobacco and tobacco products has been envisaged to be one of the most effective measures to increase awareness and communicate specific health risks such as death, addiction, cancer, stroke, lung and heart diseases. An effective package message reduces attractiveness of packaging to smokers or tobacco users, encourages smokers to quit and empower youth to say “No to Tobacco”. Health warnings that include pictures have been largely encouraged as they have been shown to be more effective since they are more likely to be noticed, critical in communicating health risks to larger number of low literacy group. The size, location and design PHWs increase its effectiveness.

The introduction of these warnings is expected to have positive public health impact by increasing awareness of the broad range of harms from tobacco and the understanding of the true risks, influencing smoking initiation and quitting behavior and ultimately decreasing the number of smokers, resulting in lives saved, increased life expectancy and lower medical costs.

PHWs are pictures meant to complement other channels of communication in order to reinforce awareness on the dangers of tobacco use especially cigarette smoke amongst the populace.

PHWs have proven to be more effective in communicating the health hazards related to tobacco use;

- They better communicate the health risks of tobacco use.
- They are critical in communicating health risks to large number of people worldwide who cannot read.

- They detract from the overall attractiveness of the package and deter new users who are usually young and image and brand conscious.
- Even tobacco users rate them as more effective.
- They are more likely to remain salient over time.
- They provoke more thought about the health risks of tobacco use and about cessation.
- They increase motivation and intention to quit.
- They are associated with increasing attempts to quit.

The Food and Drugs Authority (FDA) selected images from the WHO Afro Region website that will be relevant for use in Ghana. The FDA hired a consultant from Pro-Image Communications to pretest the selected images. The FDA and its stakeholders resolved to the usage of the current three pairs of PHWs.

The PHW covers 50% at the front and 60% at the back, positioned at the lower portion of each of the principal display area of tobacco and tobacco product packages.

Ghana from 30th April, 2018 stopped the importation of tobacco products without PHWs and gave importers till November 2018 for all tobacco products on the Ghanaian market to bear PHW.

PHWs on tobacco and tobacco products packages have successfully been introduced on the Ghanaian market since November 1st 2018.

GHANA'S PICTORIAL HEALTH WARNINGS

