



8th January

Evidence from Stroke Association, Cymru regarding the proposed amendment to the Smoke-Free Premises etc. (Wales) Regulations 2007

Stroke Association is the major stroke charity in the UK.

We work with people who share our commitment to changing the world for people affected by stroke - with stroke survivors and their families; with decision makers; with researchers and medics; as well as with our supporters.

Together we will get stroke the attention it deserves.

We believe that stroke can and should be prevented; and we believe in the power of research to save lives.

We know that with our support people can and do recover well. These beliefs drive us forward to change the world for people affected by stroke.

Around a quarter of adults in the UK smoke. Cigarettes contain nicotine, a substance that makes them highly addictive. Approximately 100,000 smokers die each year in the UK because of their habit. The majority of these deaths are due to lung cancer and other chest diseases, such as bronchitis and emphysema. Smoking also significantly increases the risk of heart disease and stroke. In fact, smokers are three times more likely to have a stroke than non-smokers. The more you smoke, the more this risk increases. If you smoke 20 cigarettes a day, you are six times more likely to have a stroke compared to a non-smoker.

Response to consultation

Is there a commercial need for this amendment to exempt performers from smoke-free requirements?

There is not a commercial need for the exemption. There are plenty of props that allow actors to simulate smoking without the health risks.

Will this amendment achieve its aim of supporting the television and film industry in Wales?

It would be interesting to know how many people who have stated that they would be more inclined to film in Wales if there was an exemption from the ban. Is this amendment working on assumptions.

I would assume that it was not a significant enough artistic difference from the other countries within the UK to draw additional business to Wales. The affect that it will have on people's health does not out weigh the risk to people's health.

Is there sufficient clarity about the circumstances in which the exemption applies?

There seems to be sufficient clarity, but why should the health of members of the public be valued above that of performers and production staff just because of their career choice and circumstances. The Welsh Government state: 'Our approach is to promote positive health throughout life - from healthy children to healthy ageing.' This should include people where ever they work.

Do the conditions offer adequate protection to other performers, production staff and members of the public?

No, the decision to allow smoking on set does not offer protection to production staff and performers.

Is there going to be protection within their employment contracts to allow them to refuse to be on set for smoking scenes – meaning that they can't be penalised for their choices.

Furthermore, there appears to be no reference to pregnant women in this amendment, only members of the public and children.

Might there be any unintended consequences of introducing this exemption?

If there is a genuine commercial need to amend the ban, and Wales are the first nation to amend, it could set the precedent where all other countries in the UK also revoke the ban in response to ensure they retain parts of the industry, meaning that we introduce health risks to a whole industry without being competitive commercially.

What health policy considerations are relevant to this amendment?

The Welsh Government still has a link to this report on it's website

http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/@dh/@en/documents/digitalasset/dh_4101475.pdf

It states that second hand smoke poses significant health risks.

The Welsh Government state that: Our focus is on preventing ill health in the first place, and on addressing problems at an early stage.

Both of these points should be considered.

For any further information please contact:

Claire O'Shea – Regional Information and Campaigns Officer
Stroke Association
Unit 8
Greenmeadow Springs Business Park
Cae Gwyrdd
Tongwynlais
Cardiff
CF15 7AB

02920 524407

claire.oshea@stroke.org.uk