



November 3, 2014

Presentation to Law Amendments Committee

Re: Bill 60 – Amendments to the *Smoke-free Places Act* and *Tobacco Access Act*

By: IWK Health Centre, represented by Nancy Hoddinott, Executive Director, Primary Health

On behalf of the IWK Health Centre, thank you for the opportunity to present this evening. The IWK commends the Province of Nova Scotia for taking action and introducing these important amendments to Nova Scotia's tobacco legislation. The IWK Health Centre fully supports Bill 60 and the proposed amendments to the *Smoke-free Places Act* and the *Tobacco Access Act*. These amendments will, as per the IWK mission, *make a difference in the health and well being of women, children, youth and families* in this province.

Progress has been made to reduce tobacco use among youth and adults and to reduce exposure to second-hand tobacco smoke. Further reductions in tobacco use, particularly among Nova Scotian children and youth, will require strong legislation to regulate new and emerging products, bold action, such as the amendments being discussed this evening, are required. Tobacco products are dangerous and regulations controlling them are required and as new products emerge, new regulations must be introduced.

I will briefly speak to the three key directions of the proposed amendments.

Regulation of electronic cigarettes as tobacco products.

The IWK endorses Smoke-Free Nova Scotia's position statement on electronic cigarettes. Electronic cigarettes have the potential to undermine gains made in tobacco control as they may contribute to re-normalizing smoking and may act as a gateway to cigarette smoking by youth. Regulation banning sales to minors, point of sale promotion and display, use in indoor public places and workplaces recognizes the potential harm of these products and defines a consistent and clear message to Nova Scotians about how and where they can be sold and used.

You will hear arguments about the potential of these products as smoking cessation aids. Currently, in the absence of science in this area, the proposed regulations make sense. Changes to the proposed amendments should only be considered where clear scientific evidence for use of e-cigarettes in supporting cessation is proven and evidence is also available that these products do not encourage youth experimentation, renormalization of smoking and do not negatively impact indoor air quality.

Banning of flavoured tobacco products

Candy-flavoured tobacco products and their packaging are designed to appeal to children and youth. These products encourage experimentation by young people and make the first smoking experience easier. Use of flavoured tobacco is high among Atlantic Canadian youth. Banning flavoured tobacco products changes the youth tobacco market and will contribute to reductions in tobacco use among children and youth.

Youth oriented flavours of e-cigarette liquid, pose an emerging area of concern. Limiting this avenue of youth promotion may reduce the appeal of e-cigarettes young non-smokers.

Menthol has been excluded from the ban. The evidence is clear, menthol is a dangerous additive. It overrides the harsh taste of tobacco, alleviates nicotine's irritating effects, interacts with nicotine to produce tobacco products that are easier to smoke, making it easier to expose smokers, especially those who are new and uninitiated, to the addictive power of nicotine. Youth in Nova Scotia smoke menthol cigarettes.

The IWK encourages you to revisit the regulations and not exempt menthol from the list of flavoured tobacco.

Banning of waterpipe use in indoor public places.

The *Smoke-Free Places Act* has greatly contributed to the denormalization of smoking and improved air quality in Nova Scotia workplaces and public places. The emergence of waterpipe use in indoor public places poses a risk to this progress. Internationally there is a call to curb the global epidemic of waterpipe use and Nova Scotia needs to act quickly to prevent further increases in waterpipe use among Nova Scotian youth and young adults and to eliminate exposure to waterpipe 'smoke' in indoor public places and workplaces.

Let me close by again congratulating the Province of Nova Scotia on this historic health promotion legislation. You have and will continue to hear from the tobacco industry arguing against these changes. If history and experience over the past number decades in tobacco control have taught us anything, it is that where the industry shows up and lobbies against change, is probably our greatest avenues for reducing tobacco use, addiction and disease. Their arguments against e-cigarette and flavoured tobacco regulations, is probably your strongest evidence that you are on the right track.

Stay the course. Thank you.