

Candidate 1 evidence

Introduction

This report will cover smoking being one of the biggest causes of death and illness in the UK. The NHS reported that 76,000 people die each year due to smoking related causes. The first solution that will be discussed is banning smoking. Smoking is one of the biggest causes of death in the UK, as well as cancer and strokes. The second solution that will be discussed is increasing both the price of cigarettes and the legal smoking age. The NHS reported that smoking causes 70% of different types of cancer. The final solution that will be discussed is keeping everything the same. Smoking damages heart and blood circulation, and increases your chances of coronary heart disease and heart attacks. Additionally, the House of Commons library reported that 18.9% of men aged 25-34 smoked, whereas 13.7% of women aged 25-34 smoked.

Banning Smoking

one solution to smoking being one of the biggest causes of death and illness in the UK, is banning smoking. This would cause the number of hospital admissions to do with smoking would decrease. 4,300 people in London die each year due to smoking related causes. ^(source 3) If smoking were to be banned the number of hospital admissions to do with smoking would decrease by a significantly large amount. Additionally, across Scotland 6.2% of an age range developed lung cancer from smoking (source 4).

If smoking was banned young people would not be able to start smoking at an early age. This would mean that they wouldn't be able to damage their health by smoking whilst they are still young and developing. In 2022, 21% of students in year 12 had tried smoking (source 5). If young people could not smoke the number of young people becoming ill and/or dying from smoking related causes would substantially decrease. Additionally, a large number of young people reported feeling peer pressured to smoke. If a person smokes 25 cigarettes a day, they are 25 times more likely to develop lung cancer. (source 6)

Banning smoking continued

However, if smoking were to be banned illegal black market cigarettes would be bought. The number of illegal black market cigarettes would rise severely if smoking was made illegal. Illegal foreign cigarettes by a brand 'Jin Lin' were being sold for as cheap as £3.50 a packet. (Source 7)

Increasing the price of cigarettes and the legal smoking age

Another solution to smoking being one of the biggest causes of death and illness in the UK is increasing the price of cigarettes and the legal smoking age. This would give young people who have just turned 18 more time to mature and fully decide if they want to start smoking. ^{Prime Minister} Rishi Sunak has banned smoking in 2023, meaning that currently ~~two thirds~~ ^{two thirds} of young people had tried smoking or ^{one under the age of 14 can legally smoke} ~~one under the age of 18~~ ^(source 8) cigarette before the age of 18. (Source 8). When more health risks and concerns about smoking are released to the public the number of daily smokers will begin to decrease. In 2022 it was reported that 13 million illegal cigarettes were confiscated from streets (Source 13). It was reported in 2021 that the number of 18-24 year olds who were smoking increased by 25% in the first lockdown. (Source 11).

Increasing the price and legal age of smoking continued

If the price and legal smoking age was increased it may deter those living in poorer communities from smoking as it has become too expensive. Smokers from poorer communities may quit smoking to put money towards necessities such as: food, clothes and bills. It was reported in 2023 that young people are twice as likely to go into small shops to ^(source 12) illegally buy vapes than they were in 2018. The number of poorer people smoking would decrease massively if cigarettes became too expensive. Additionally, it was reported in 2022 that 13 million illegal cigarettes were confiscated from streets in the UK as black market sales rise. (source 13)

However, if the price of cigarettes and the legal smoking age was increased people would still find ways around it. Young people would manage to illegally buy cigarettes for a cheaper price. It was reported in 2022 that illegal tobacco and vapes ~~sets~~ valued at £50,000 were confiscated from a shop in Longton, Staffordshire (source 14)

Keeping everything the same

The final solution to smoking being one of the biggest causes of death and illness in the UK is keeping everything the same. If everything was kept the same the number of young people smoking would not change. It was reported in 2023 that 61% of 12-15 year olds said they are able to smoke anywhere in their home. ^(source 15) The number of illegal cigarettes being sold would not rise by a significantly large amount. Additionally in the 2023 report, 71% of young people reported being able to smoke in certain rooms of their house (source 15).

If everything is kept the same the number of black market tobacco sales will decrease. Black market tobacco sales will stay less popular if smoking stays legal. As of 2023 black market tobacco sales have become increasingly popular among young people. But if young people become old enough to legally buy a cigarette, illegal sale numbers will decrease. Additionally, young people have older people go into stores to illegally buy them legal cigarettes.

However, if everything stays the same, death and illness numbers will continue to increase. It was found that in the UK, smoking causes 150 cancers each day.

Conclusion

In conclusion, out of all 3 solutions, solution 2: increasing both the price and legal smoking age is the best. This is because it is the most practical solution to combatting the rise of smoking illness and death cases. The best source to help contribute to this solution was source 11. Solution 1, banning smoking is very impractical and dangerous to current smokers who would experience very dangerous withdrawal symptoms if it was banned. The best source to help contribute to this conclusion was source 3. Source 3, keeping everything the same is the most dangerous and catastrophic to society. The best solution to help contribute to this conclusion was source 16.

Research Methods

source 14 (BBC) was a very reliable source because the reports are published by qualified and experienced journalists, however, it is government funded so the stories it publishes can be politically swayed.

Source 1 (NHS) was a very reliable source because all of the facts and figures were up to date, however, not all of the statistics are from all over the UK, as someone may not know they

source suffering from a smoking related health problem.

Research Methods Continued

one source 1 (NHS) was a very reliable source because all of the facts and figures are up to date. However, not all of the statistics are from every single case in the UK, as someone might not know they are suffering from a smoking related illness/disease.

Scottish Candidate Number - [REDACTED]

Sources 1, 2, 3

<https://www.nhs.uk/common-health-questions/lifestyle/what-are-the-health-risks-of-smoking/>

<https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-7648/>

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/health/smoking-kills-one-person-hour-london-cancer-research-uk-b1084666.html>

Sources 7, 8, 9

<https://hackney.gov.uk/illegal-tobacco>

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2023/sep/22/rishi-sunak-considers-banning-cigarettes-for-next-generation>

<https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/statistics-on-smoking/statistics-on-smoking-england-2020/part-1-smoking-related-ill-health-and-mortality#:~:text=Admissions%20estimated%20to%20be%20attributable%20to%20smoking%20over%20time&text=Range%3A%20440000%20to%20520000.&text=End%20of%20interactive%20chart.&text=In%202019%2F20%20this%20represented,%25%20in%202009%2F10>

Source 13

<https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwipxaDM6-iCAxVPaUEAHTcGBigQFnoECCMQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cityam.com%2F13m-illegal-cigarettes-seized-from-uk-streets-as-black-market-booms%2F&usq=AOvVaw3j9pzuejOGKPkWQlbfGTHj&opi=89978449>

Reported in 2022 that 13 million illegal cigarettes were confiscated from streets in the UK as black market sales rise.

Sources 4, 5, 6

<https://www.scotpho.org.uk/population-dynamics/deaths/data/most-frequent-causes#:~:text=Overall%2C%20the%20most%20common%20causes,occurring%20individual%20causes%20of%20death>

<https://ash.org.uk/health-inequalities/youth-smoking>

<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/news/young-persons-behaviour-attitudes-survey-2022-substance-use-smoking-alcohol-drugs>

Sources 10, 11, 12

<https://stateofchildhealth.rcpch.ac.uk/evidence/health-behaviours/smoking-young-people/>

<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/news/2021/aug/surge-smoking-among-young-adults-during-lockdown>

Reported in 2021 that the number of 18-24 year olds who were smoking increased by 25% during the first Covid-19 lockdown.

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/07/31/children-corner-shops-vapes-lax-id-checks/>

Reported in 2023 that young people are twice as likely to go into small shops illegally buy vapes than they were in 2018.

Source 14, 15, 16

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-stoke-staffordshire-67510954>

Reported in 2022 that illegal tobacco and vapes valued at £50,000 were confiscated from a shop in Longton, Staffordshire.

<https://www.blackpooljsna.org.uk/Developing-Well/Children-and-young-peoples-health/Tobacco-use-in-children-and-young-people.aspx>

Reported in 2023 that 6% of 12-15 year olds reported being able to smoke anywhere in their home, and 7% reported being able to smoke in certain rooms.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/health-and-families/smoking-cancer-uk-every-day-b2448330.html>

It was found that in the UK smoking causes 150 cancers each day.