

## Nigeria: Implementation of Cigarette Ban to Persons below 18 Years

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During a press briefing in Abuja, as part of World No Tobacco Day, the Minister of Health, Professor Isaac Adewole, stated that new efforts will be made to enforce the ban on the sale of cigarettes to persons under 18 years in Nigeria.

According to him, after carefully analyzing the 2015 National Tobacco Control (NTC) Act, it has become even more important for the government to begin the implementation of certain provisions of the Act.

The Minister stated that the government will begin implementing the following:

### **Ban on sale of cigarettes in single sticks**

- Prohibition of sale of tobacco products to and by anyone below 18;
- Ban of sale of cigarettes in single sticks. Cigarettes must be sold in packs of 20 sticks only;
- Smokeless tobacco shall be sold in a minimum of a pack of 30 grams;
- Ban of sale or offer for sale or distribution of tobacco or tobacco products through mail, internet, or other online device;
- Prohibition of interference of tobacco industry in public health and related issues;

- Prohibition of smoking on the premises of a child care facility, educational facility, and health care facility. Other prohibited places for smoking include playgrounds, amusement parks, plazas, public parks, stadiums, public transports, restaurants, bars, or other public gathering spaces.

He further stated that owners or managers of the places listed above, who permit, encourage, or fail to stop smoking in those places may also face prosecution.

Adewole noted that available evidence from World Health Organization (WHO) indicates that tobacco use costs national economies immensely, through increased health-care cost and decreased productivity, adding that it worsens health inequalities and increases poverty as the poorest people spend less on essentials such as food, education, and health care.

The Minister also stated that the health ministry in partnership with Washington DC–based Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids will in June 2017 launch a six-month behavioral change campaign, which he said would raise awareness among Nigerians about the provisions of the Act as well as the dangers and diseases associated with tobacco use.

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### About Ufuoma Akpotaire ›



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