DSM Foundation responds to Tobacco and Vapes Bill completing its passage through parliament

Wednesday 22 April, 2026

The DSM Foundation is pleased to see that the Tobacco and Vapes Bill has completed its passage through parliament. With media sources stating that the Bill will receive Royal Assent before the end of April 2026 – becoming legislation in the form of the Tobacco and Vapes Act 2026 – this will mean the significant changes to the landscape of nicotine products that will benefit young people and society more widely will start to come in very soon.

Fiona Spargo-Mabbs OBE, who founded the drug education charity that works with tens of thousands of young people every year, said: ""This really is a historic moment, which we're so pleased to see. It is a significant step closer to bringing this generation of teenagers - and all those to follow - greater protection from the ravages smoking currently causes globally. The controls being brought in to reduce the appeal of vaping to young people will also hopefully help cut use, without stopping adults who want to cut back and stop smoking, and it is good to see the advent of tighter controls for nicotine pouches, which have had increasing awareness and use among young people over the last few years."

The new legislation will take months if not years to be implemented (as the measures are likely to be introduced in stages), but will ultimately see the following changes, among others:

- a ban on advertising and sponsorship of all vapes and other nicotine products (such as pouches), mirroring restrictions already in place for tobacco products
- a ban on the sale of vapes and nicotine products to under 18s, and an end to free distribution of these products and sales from vending machines
- restrictions on the flavours, packaging and displays for vapes and other nicotine products
- anyone born on or after 1st January 2009 will never be able to legally purchase tobacco in the UK
- expansion of current indoor smoking restrictions to certain outdoor public spaces and workplaces, and to make more places vape-free.

The groundbreaking legislation – heralded by health minister Baroness Merron as "the biggest public health intervention in a generation", was introduced in parliament in March 2024 by then prime minister Rishi Sunak, and has taken over two years to go through all the relevant stages of scrutiny and amendment at government level. The new Act of Parliament will apply UK-wide, building on existing legislative frameworks of all four nations to create a cohesive approach.

DSM Foundation survey data from over 4,400 15-18 year olds (since September 2026) shows that 88 per cent of this age group regard vapes as being around for people their own age, second only to alcohol, with 70 and 56 per cent saying the same about cigarettes and nicotine pouches (often referred to as snus) respectively. This underlines the potential impact of the impending Tobacco and Vapes Act. However, charity founder and director Fiona Spargo-Mabbs cautioned against thinking that changes to the law will eliminate exposure and subsequent harms, stating: "We will always need excellent, evidence-based education about drugs, that encompasses both knowledge and skills building, in order for young people to become empowered to make much more informed and hence safer choices – and hence truly bring about the changes we seek."

Information for editors:

The DSM Foundation is a drug education charity established in 2014 following the death of 16 year old Daniel Spargo-Mabbs from an accidental overdose of ecstasy. His family felt that he simply hadn't known enough to be able to make decisions that would keep him safe, and realized there was a huge gap in the resources and support available to schools, so set up the charity in order to spare other families going through what they had experienced.

The aim of the DSM Foundation is to provide young people with relevant, age-appropriate, up to date and evidence-based information about drugs so they develop the skills to make choices that will keep themselves and their friends as safe as possible. To this end, the charity is currently working in hundreds of schools, colleges and community organisations with children and young people, and also provides workshops for parents and caregivers, and training for school and college staff – the two groups shown by NHS survey data as the most likely sources of information about drugs and alcohol sought out by 11-15 year olds. Educational settings are also able to access "I Love You Mum, I Promise I Won't Die", a verbatim play by Mark Wheeller that was commissioned by the charity to tell Dan's story in the words

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of his family and friends, through studying the work itself (sometimes due to it being a GCSE Drama set text on the Eduqas syllabus), or booking a Theatre in Education performance. Schools and colleges can also download age-appropriate, relevant, up to date and evidence-based drugs education lesson resources free of charge from the DSM Foundation website for delivery by teachers through PSHE/PSE provision.

For more information about the DSM Foundation, go to https://www.dsmfoundation.org.uk/.

Media enquiries about this press release or the work of the DSM Foundation should be sent to media@dsmfoundation.org.uk.

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