

Longer term impact of cigarette package warnings in Australia compared to the United Kingdom and Canada: Findings from the International Tobacco Control (ITC) Four Country Survey

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Abstract

This study examines the effects of different cigarette package warnings in Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom up to 5 years post-implementation. The data came from the International Tobacco Control Surveys. Measures included salience of warnings, cognitive responses, forgoing cigarettes and avoiding warnings. Although salience of the UK warnings was higher than the Australian and Canadian pictorial warnings, this did not lead to greater levels of cognitive reactions, forgoing or avoiding. There was no difference in ratings between the Australian and UK warnings for cognitive responses and forgoing, but the Canadian warnings were responded to more strongly. Avoidance of the Australian warnings was greater than to UK ones, but less than to the Canadian warnings. The impact of warnings declined over time in all three countries. Declines were comparable between Australia and the United Kingdom on all measures except avoiding, where Australia had a greater rate of decline; and for salience where the decline was slower in Canada. Having two rotating sets of warnings does not appear to reduce wear-out over a single set of warnings. Warning size may be more important than warning type in preventing wear-out, although both probably contribute interactively.

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