

IJB Chairs  
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[www.nhsllothian.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsllothian.scot.nhs.uk)

Date 5 October 2016  
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Our Ref AKM/jewb  
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Dear Sir/Madam

**Test purchasing (cigarettes) in Lothian**

As you may be aware the latest SALSUS 2013 (Scottish Adolescent Lifestyle Survey) results show a welcome further decline in the proportion of young people who report being a regular smoker. It is however a concern to note that 36% of young people ages 13years and 15years in Lothian report being able to buy cigarettes from a shop. This is higher than the national figure (28% of young people report buying from shops). This indicates that a significant minority of retailers are breaking the law restricting the sale of tobacco products to those aged over 18 years.

Test purchasing is an important part of deterring under-age sales and identifying potential offenders. By demonstrating a clear commitment to compliance with Article 16 of the WHO Framework for Tobacco Control it highlights that the Local Authority takes the health and wellbeing of children and young people seriously. Your continued support for the Trading Standards staff that protect young people from being exploited by unscrupulous retailers by undertaking test purchasing is essential. I look forward to hearing and helping to promote your plans for test purchasing in your area the remainder of 2016/17 and into 2017/18.

Yours sincerely



**Professor Alison McCallum**  
**Director of Public Health and Health Policy**



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Chair Brian Houston  
Chief Executive Tim Davison

*Lothian NHS Board is the common name of Lothian Health Board*