



Department  
of Health &  
Social Care

From Neil O'Brien MP  
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Primary Care and Public Health

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Richard Crosby  
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By email to: [hello@consideratepouchers.org](mailto:hello@consideratepouchers.org)

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Dear Richard,

Thank you for your correspondence of 30 June about nicotine pouches. I apologise for the delay in replying.

As you may be aware, nicotine pouches are regulated as consumer products under the General Products Safety Regulations 2005. Suppliers of those products must comply with those regulations and ensure the products are safe to use. However, nicotine pouches are not covered under the same regulations as nicotine vapes and tobacco products. At present the industry are applying rules to only sell to people aged 18 years-and-over and to target adult smokers to switch to these products.

In May 2021, the department asked the Committee on Toxicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COT) to undertake an assessment of the potential toxicological risk to users from the use of oral nicotine pouches. The COT work has now been completed, and they published their statement on the 17 April.

The COT statement states that oral nicotine pouches if used as intended, without concurrent cigarette or e-cigarette use, may reduce the risks to smokers. However, nicotine-related ill-effects on health could occur with long-term use in users and their offspring, and the COT has identified research gaps and flagged that the long-term health harms are not known. The COT notes that use by non-smokers is likely to be associated with some adverse health effects due to the nicotine.

The department is looking at further areas of research regarding these products in light of the COT findings.

I hope this reply is helpful.

**NEIL O'BRIEN**

