



## SAMPLE OF LETTER SENT TO PHARMACY CHAINS

# Illinois State Medical Society

May 18, 2016

Stefano Pessina  
Executive Vice Chairman and CEO  
Walgreens Boots Alliance  
4050 Commercial Avenue, MS #N5286  
Northbrook, IL 63146-6928

Dear Mr. Pessina:

On behalf of the physician and medical student members of the Illinois State Medical Society (ISMS), I write with regard to the important topic of tobacco and e-cigarettes sales. With the overwhelming evidence that tobacco products are detrimental to one's health and the lack of evidence on the impact of e-cigarettes on one's health, ISMS believes that the sale of tobacco and e-cigarettes in your pharmacies directly conflicts with your primary role as part of the healthcare delivery system. ISMS strongly urges that your company voluntarily stop the sales of these products immediately.

Your pharmacies are integral parts of our health care system, with the primary goal of improving the health of your patrons. The sale of tobacco products is an inherent conflict of interest for pharmacies, given that tobacco use represents the leading cause of death in the United States and contributes greatly to the nation's staggering healthcare costs.

ISMS asks you to join your competitors: CVS, which took tobacco products off their shelves in September 2014 and Target, which has been tobacco free since the 1980's.

Additionally, there is no evidence that has established e-cigarettes as a safe cessation tool for those trying to quit smoking, and in fact, ISMS considers these products to be drug delivery devices whose sales should be prohibited unless approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). In recent rules released by the FDA, steps are being taken to regulate e-cigarettes and keep them out of the hands of children, suggesting they share our concern about the safety of these products. Until that time where there is clear proof of its efficacy, ISMS also recommends that marketing, advertising and sales of these products cease immediately.

On behalf of the physicians of Illinois, ISMS thanks Walgreens for the important role that your pharmacies play in the health of your patrons. Because it conflicts with your primary role of keeping your patrons healthy, we urge you to *immediately* stop the sales of tobacco and e-cigarette products in your pharmacies. With the help of companies like yours, we can successfully work towards reducing and ultimately eliminating the death and disease caused by tobacco use in this country.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss these recommendations further, please feel free to contact Lance Kovacs, Assistant Director of Medical Service and Public Health Policy ([lancekovacs@isms.org](mailto:lancekovacs@isms.org) or 800/782-4767, ext. 2459).

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William A. McDade, M.D.".

William A. McDade, M.D., Ph.D.  
Chair, Board of Trustees  
Illinois State Medical Society

cc: Thomas M. Anderson, M.D.  
Nestor A. Ramirez, M.D.  
Alexander R. Lerner