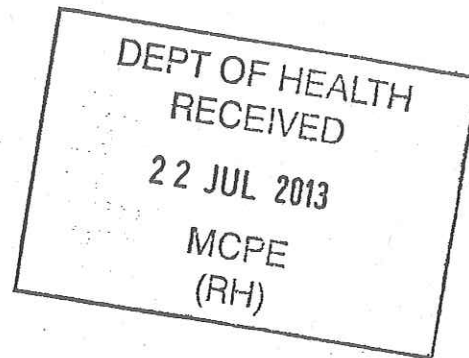




CPH | CENTRE FOR PUBLIC HEALTH
LIVERPOOL JOHN MOORES UNIVERSITY
A World Health Organization Collaborating Centre

Norman Lamb MP
Minister of State for Care and Support
Department of Health
79 Whitehall
London
SW1A 2NS



19th July 2013

Dear Minister,

Following the withdrawal of the Faculty of Public Health from the Responsibility Deal, I am writing to formally resign as the Faculty Representative on the Responsibility Deal Alcohol Network and also as chair of the monitoring and evaluation group.

I have sat with representatives of the alcohol industry in Responsibility Deal meetings for the last two years. Over this period I have seen the Deal turned by industry into a tool to avoid actions that would improve people's health. At the last meeting an industry representative even made it clear that their continued contributions to the deal were dependent on a minimum unit price not being implemented.

While my words may carry little weight, I refer you to the recent statement by the Director General of the World Health Organization:

Public health must also contend with Big Food, Big Soda, and Big Alcohol. All of these industries fear regulation, and protect themselves by using the same tactics [as tobacco]. Research has documented these tactics well. They include front groups, lobbies, promises of self-regulation, lawsuits, and industry-funded research that confuses the evidence and keeps the public in doubt. Tactics also include gifts, grants, and contributions to worthy causes that cast these industries as respectable corporate citizens in the eyes of politicians and the public. They include arguments that place the responsibility for harm to health on individuals, and portray government actions as interference in personal liberties and free choice. (10th June 2013).

In recent weeks we have seen these exact tactics successfully utilised in England to block tobacco and alcohol policy that would have saved lives. As chair of the monitoring and evaluation group I have tried, with colleagues, to bring an evaluative framework to at least some aspects of the Responsibility Deal. Even here however, transparency and trust in the process has been eroded by data being delivered inappropriately to the industry's Portman Group who not only failed to inform me that they had the data but also unilaterally asked for it to be revisited at least twice.

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These things said, it has been a genuine pleasure working with you and the Public Health Minister and I have never been in any doubt about your personal commitment to tackle these issues. Consequently, while I cannot work with the Responsibility Deal process any longer please do not hesitate to contact me should you think my help or advice would be of use in the future.

Yours sincerely,



Professor Mark A. Bellis OBE

Cc

[REDACTED]
Nick Sheron, Head of Clinical Hepatology, University of Southampton
Elizabeth Woodson, Director of Health and Wellbeing, Department of Health
[REDACTED], Alcohol Policy Manager, Department of Health