

## **HIPS/25/20 - Improving understanding of nicotine pouches: A mixed-methods study examining the packaging and chemical composition of nicotine pouches, and response of adolescents and adults who smoke**

Nicotine pouches are small sachets which are placed between the cheek and gum to deliver nicotine. Use among adolescents and adults who smoke in Scotland is rising rapidly. There is a need to understand what nicotine pouches are being sold and what information is on the packaging, what these products contain, and how they may impact public health.

We will carry out three studies to address these gaps. First, we will buy nicotine pouches sold in five urban and rural locations in Scotland and document how the packaging is used to promote them, and what information is given about the product and possible risks. Second, we will test the nicotine pouches we buy to see how much nicotine they contain and whether they have potentially harmful substances. Third, we will talk with adolescents and adults who smoke to hear their opinions on nicotine pouches, whether the packaging influences how they think and feel about these products, and ways in which the packaging could be changed to better inform and protect the public. Throughout the project we will work with our public involvement panel of current and former nicotine pouch users.

The findings will be of considerable value to the Scottish Government given so little is known about these novel products. The findings will directly inform how nicotine pouches and the packaging could be regulated with the aim of discouraging use among children and adolescents, while not discouraging adults who smoke who would benefit from completely switching to these.