



PHILIP MORRIS  
INTERNATIONAL

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Prof. Jean-Daniel Tissot  
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Prof. Dr. med Nicolas Rodondi  
Director Berner Institut für Hausarztmedizin  
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**Re: Auer R, Concha-Lozano N, Jacot-Sadowski I, Cornuz J, Berthet A. Heat-Not-Burn Tobacco Cigarettes: Smoke by Any Other Name. JAMA Intern Med. (the "Research Letter")**

Dear Professors Leyvraz, Tissot and Rodondi,

The solution for maximizing smokers' wellbeing is clear – quitting is the best option. For those who don't and would otherwise continue to smoke, it is important to provide access to potentially reduced harm alternatives, as well as accurate information about them. As the manufacturer of the product *IQOS* which is the subject of the Research Letter referred to above, we believe your urgent action is required to prevent the spread of inaccurate information that it has generated, which is misleading consumers.

Philip Morris International (PMI) has conducted a rigorous and broad scientific assessment of *IQOS*, resulting in over 30 peer-reviewed publications (attachments 1 and 2). More than 30'000 individual chemical analyses of the *IQOS* aerosol have been performed. This includes 121 large studies to quantify the levels of 58 of the most widely recognized harmful and potentially harmful constituents. All of these studies were conducted in accredited facilities using validated methods, 115 of them by an independent laboratory. Our results substantiate the conclusion that the *IQOS* aerosol contains on average >90% lower levels of harmful and potentially harmful constituents than smoke from a reference cigarette designed for scientific research purpose (3R4F). Our studies have also established that *IQOS* does not combust tobacco: this has been verified by 6 different international experts who are recognized leaders in combustion research. *IQOS* is only for adult smokers who would otherwise continue to smoke: it contains nicotine, which is addictive, and it is not risk-free. We are consistent in our communication of these facts to adult smokers.

We actively encourage independent studies on the product and are committed to act on any reliable information that improves our methods or contradicts our findings. To prevent inaccurate information from reaching consumers, it is important that any independent study be conducted with an appropriate degree of scientific rigor. In our view the study described in the Research Letter falls significantly short in a number of areas, which are described in our review of the study (attachment 3). In a recent radio interview (CQFD on RTS Première Radio, 31<sup>st</sup> May 2017), one of the authors acknowledged some of the limitations of the study: these limitations were not made clear in the original Research Letter.

We take great care to ensure that all stakeholders are properly informed about our scientific findings and that media reports on our science are accurate. You will no doubt appreciate the importance of endeavoring to ensure that smokers receive accurate and non-misleading information regarding alternatives to cigarettes. In this regard, the authors' decision to submit the Research Letter to JAMA Internal Medicine (the "Journal") is of additional concern. According to the Journal's website, it is aimed at primary care physicians and claims an ability to generate "extensive press coverage". Indeed,

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sensationalist and inaccurate media stories were published in multiple countries, many of them highlighting that this study was conducted by Swiss "experts". This type of coverage has generated confusion amongst *IQOS* users – we have direct evidence of this from our call center logs.

Last week we were advised that physicians had been made aware of the Research Letter due to its promotion on the website [pmu-lausanne.ch](http://pmu-lausanne.ch). Physicians and medical institutions have a special obligation to society to respect and accurately convey science when dealing with patients. Given the serious concerns we raise with regard to the validity of the study and the acknowledgement from an author of at least some of its limitations, we respectfully request that the promotion and reference be removed from the website as soon as possible.

In the light of previous correspondence received from two of the authors' research institutes (attachments 4 and 5), we are concerned that the study may have been motivated by an objection related to our commercialization plans. Our concern in this respect is amplified by the authors' choice of decidedly non-scientific and pejorative language in the Research Letter – for example, the authors accuse PMI of "*dancing around the definition of smoke to avoid indoor-smoking bans...*" As you consider this information, please be assured of our continued openness to discuss with the cantonal and municipal governments and their delegated specialists how to best address the interest of non-smokers in venues used as part of our efforts to encourage adult smokers who would otherwise continue to smoke to switch fully from combustible cigarettes to the non-combustible *IQOS* proposition. PMI's research, development and commercialization efforts are not about smoking restrictions. Our efforts are about offering a scientifically substantiated harm reduction alternative to adult smokers who would otherwise continue to smoke.

We respectfully request that you instruct the authors to urgently retract the inaccurate and damaging Research Letter and re-conduct the study at an accredited laboratory using validated methods that are appropriate to quantify the constituents under investigation. PMI would be happy to reimburse the costs of this new study, either directly or by facilitating the collection of donations from *IQOS* consumers, who would doubtless be interested in receiving validated results from a study conducted under the direction of independent and credible institutions such as the CHUV and Universities of Lausanne and Bern. Since the authors do not appear to have a relevant track record in the field of study of the Research Letter, we respectfully recommend that they consult with suitably experienced aerosol analytical chemistry and combustion science experts when designing methodology, interpreting data and formulating the conclusions of any new study.

Thank you in advance for your kind consideration of this extraordinarily important and urgent subject matter and for your prompt response. I reiterate our previous invitations to the authors to enter into a constructive discussion. We would happily host you and the authors at our Research and Development facility in Neuchâtel to discuss the matters that I have brought to your attention. In addition, we are keen to understand any specific concerns that you or the authors may have as we continue with our mission to convert adult smokers who would otherwise continue to smoke to products that are likely to present less risk of harm.

With kind regards,



Dr Moira Gilchrist  
Vice-President Corporate Affairs, Reduced-Risk Products

cc:

M. Pierre-Luc Maillefer, Président du Conseil, Policlinique médicale universitaire  
Prof. David Vernez, Directeur Institut universitaire romand de Santé au Travail (IST)

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