



Department  
of Health

From Jane Ellison MP  
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Sir Paul Beresford MP  
House of Commons  
Westminster  
London SW1A 0AA

*Dear Paul*

I would like to thank the All Party Parliamentary Group on Skin (APPGS) for their comprehensive report on the regulation of sunbeds, which highlights the potential impact on health from making regulations under the Sunbeds (Regulation) Act 2010 (the 2010 Act).

I have asked my officials, as well as Public Health England (PHE), to consider what would be required technically to take forward the recommendations to regulate under the 2010 Act, and to assess the impact this would have on business. I feel it is important to ensure that any proposed regulations are proportionate when considering the balance between the benefits to the public's health and the likely impact on business. This would need to be done as part of Regulatory Policy Committee scrutiny of any regulations, and therefore it seems sensible to complete this work earlier rather than later.

I would like to set out our response to each of the report's recommendations in turn, and how these will be given further consideration.

Compliance testing for radiant exposure (dose) and irradiance limits

I was concerned to see the number of sunbeds reported as not meeting the minimum British and European Union Standards in your report, and agree with the need for a more consistent approach to compliance testing by local authorities.

The Department agrees with the APPGS's recommendation to study the appropriate method of measuring total dosage and irradiance, this will form part of the detailed consideration I have asked Departmental and PHE officials to undertake. We also agree with the need to consider how we ensure a more consistent approach to testing by local authority environmental health officers, and how this could be improved will also be considered, however I feel that we should explore non-regulatory approaches to achieving this in the first instance.

### Unstaffed tanning facilities

I note the concern of respondents to the inquiry, and APPGS's concerns, about unstaffed tanning facilities. Our review will consider the risks posed by unstaffed facilities, with a view to determining whether introducing regulations to ban such unstaffed facilities would be proportionate when these risks are weighed against the cost to business.

### Screening of skin types

Skin type is clearly an important determinant of risk for those who choose to use sunbeds. I have asked that how skin type should be assessed, what advice should be offered, and how staff should be trained and patients informed as part of the review.

### Provision of balanced health information

I agree that it is important that those using sunbeds are aware of the potential health risks of doing so, and also of their skin type and how this should be taken into consideration when using tanning facilities. Given that there is, as the report recognises, sharp division on the health risks of using sunbeds, I feel there is a need to agree on what the health advice should be before the Department would be able to issue such guidance. This clearly needs a more detailed consideration as any advice issued needs to be authoritative.

### Provision of safety goggles

I agree that safety goggles should be provided to everyone wanting to use a sunbed, and have asked how effective eye protection might be verified to be considered as part of the work being undertaken. However, I feel it is important that there is an agreed standard for eye protection before further regulatory steps are taken.

### Licencing of sunbed providers

Further to the considerations listed above, I have asked officials consider the case for legislation to introduce licencing for sunbed providers as recommended by APPGS as part of the review. It should however be noted that such a change would require new primary legislation.

The work I have requested will take some time to conclude, and I will not be bringing forward any regulations during the remaining months of this session. Nevertheless, the work being undertaken will inform the next Government and potentially allow for early decision making in the next Parliament.

*With kind regards,*

*Jane*

**JANE ELLISON**