

August 17, 2021

The Rt Hon Dr Kwasi Kwarteng MP
Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
1 Victoria Street London
SW1H 0ET

The Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP
Secretary of State for Health and Social Care
39 Victoria Street London
SW1H 0EU

Dear Ministers,

On behalf of the below medical, patient and health organizations, we urge you to use your leadership authority to prevent the sale of Vectura to the tobacco conglomerate Philip Morris International (PMI). It is clear that PMI's acquisition of Vectura is not in the best interests of the public, lung disease patients or even the medical drug and device industry.

As you may know, Vectura is a United Kingdom-based medical drug and device company that specializes in inhalation drugs. The company makes components for metered dose inhalers and dry powdered inhalers used to treat a wide range of respiratory conditions including chronic obstructive lung disease and asthma. The components for metered dose inhalers and dry powder inhalers made by Vectura are used by several pharmaceutical companies that make respiratory medications used by lung disease patients around the globe.

PMI, the world's largest tobacco company, wants to buy Vectura and has already taken several steps towards acquiring the company. There are many reasons why PMI's acquisition of Vectura is not in the best interest of patients or the public and perversely will only serve to help PMI's efforts to lure future generations of youth into a lifetime of nicotine addiction.

PMI is a tobacco company that profits off the sale of a harmful and addictive substance that causes death, disease, and emotional devastation around the globe. According to the [Lancet](#), there are over 1.1 billion smokers worldwide, and smoking results in over 7.7 million deaths annually. The [Lancet](#) further notes that 89% of new smokers start smoking before they are 25 years old and that 18.5% of smokers began smoking regularly by age 15 – demonstrating how the tobacco industry continues to rely on recruiting children into a lifetime of nicotine addiction.

Now PMI wants to both addict individuals to their tobacco products and then profit from selling inhaled medicines used to treat the respiratory disease (like chronic obstructive lung disease, chronic cough, and lung cancer) that regularly results from tobacco use. It is a scenario that our organizations strongly believe should be avoided.

There are additional concerns with the proposed sale of Vectura that we wanted to bring to your attention. Vectura is one of the world's leading companies in the science of delivering inhaled medications. The same expertise that is used to deliver the right dose of life saving drugs to patients around the globe can just as easily be corrupted to deliver addictive nicotine directly to the lungs of youth around the world. PMI may claim they are acquiring Vectura to diversify their business beyond tobacco, but the result of buying Vectura will provide PMI with the inhalation technical expertise and supply chain to develop a new generation of nicotine products to continue their profitable business of nicotine addiction.

Allowing PMI to purchase Vectura would also put other reputable pharmaceutical companies in the awkward position of choosing to do business with a tobacco-owned company that makes essential inhalation drug components or establish a whole new supply chain for the key components that Vectura currently provides. Creating a new supply chain will cost pharmaceutical companies time, effort and valuable resources without any benefit to patients.

The United Kingdom is a strong supporter of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) – an international treaty that formalizes the policy tools governments have to limit the disease and destruction caused by tobacco-addiction. We urge you to act in the spirit of the FCTC and use your authority and leadership to prevent the sale of Vectura to PMI. The health of your people and people around the globe depends on your leadership and action. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Action on Smoking and Health (Washington, DC, USA)

ALLERGY & ASTHMA NETWORK

Alpha-1 Foundation

American Association for Respiratory Care

American Heart Association

American Thoracic Society

Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids

COPD Foundation

Cystic Fibrosis Research Institute

Dorney-Koppel Foundation

Hermansky-Pudlak Sundrome Network

PCD Foundation

Pulmonary Fibrosis Foundation

Respiratory Health Association

The LAM Foundation

US COPD Coalition

US COPD Coalition

