



March 2, 2026

Dr. Sophie Braznell

Tobacco Control Research Group  
University of Bath



United Kingdom

Dear Dr. Braznell,

Here we go again.

When a respected university continues to circulate claims that have been corrected, rebutted, and publicly addressed for years, the issue is no longer scientific uncertainty—it is credibility.

The University of Bath's latest LinkedIn [video](#) on heated tobacco products, which repeatedly features Philip Morris International's product, does not inform the public or advance understanding. Instead, it recycles discredited allegations that the Tobacco Control Research Group (TCRG) has been challenged on exhaustively and repeatedly, yet continues to present as unresolved. This is not academic rigor or freedom; it is willful disregard of evidence and a failure to inform the public accurately.

At this point, repetition can no longer reasonably be mistaken for oversight. The position advanced by your group and others a decade ago—that “more evidence is needed”—is no longer tenable. You have had ample opportunity to review the extensive body of evidence, including our research and that of independent scientists, as well as our multiple, detailed responses to the TCRG, including our response last year addressing errors in TCRG authors' contribution to the 2024 Royal College of Physicians report. Yet the same inaccuracies persist.

It is increasingly difficult to understand why so much effort is devoted to recycling misleading claims rather than engaging with the central question: how best to help the more than one billion people who smoke move away from combustible cigarettes as quickly as possible.

The science supporting heated tobacco is [extensive](#), with more than 1,000 independent studies, many of which support our findings. You also continue to ignore the conclusions of numerous government health agencies, including the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's [published](#) findings on our heated tobacco product, which led to its authorization as a Modified Risk Tobacco Product with reduced exposure claims more than five years ago. Given these facts, how is misleading those who stand to benefit—people you call “guinea pigs”—anything but bad faith?



Our research meets internationally recognized quality standards. It is peer reviewed, published, scrutinized, debated, and assessed by highly respected regulators, with funding transparently disclosed. Scientific disagreement is legitimate; ignoring inconvenient data is not.

No tobacco or nicotine product is risk free, and we have never claimed otherwise. We have been clear that these products are addictive, not harmless, not cessation devices, and intended for adults who would otherwise smoke. The repeated allegation that they are designed to “hook youth” is false, unsupported by data, and indefensible.

To our surprise and delight, you acknowledged in your latest video that heated tobacco products “have potential benefits” for adults who would otherwise continue smoking. Perhaps that recognition could be the starting point for a solution-centered discussion.

Which brings me to a simple point: we have written, published, and responded—repeatedly. Perhaps it is time to talk. A direct meeting would allow us to move beyond recycled claims and focus on what will reduce smoking faster than ever thought possible. What, exactly, is the harm in talking?

Sincerely,



Dr. Moira Gilchrist  
Chief Global Communications Officer  
Philip Morris International