A closer look at what the Tobacco Control Act hasn't done

By ACSH Staff — July 17, 2012

Last week, we were less than pleased [1] by FDA commissioner Margaret Hamburg's empty boasting [2] about the success of the 2009 Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act. This week, ACSH scientific advisor Dr. Michael Siegel, who is on the faculty of Boston University's School of Public Health, does us one better. In a post [3] on his blog, The Rest of the Story, Dr. Siegel evaluates each of the seven FDA actions that Dr. Hamburg claims have been effective in helping to protect public health from tobacco use. His conclusion?

The rest of the story is that after three years, the Tobacco Act has accomplished nothing.

I do agree with the Commissioner on one point: The Tobacco Act is working. It is working as intended. And that intention was to make it look like the law would protect the public's health without actually taking any of the difficult actions necessary to really put a dent in cigarette sales. The law was intended to allow public health groups and politicians to be able to score political and financial points from their constituents by telling them that they were standing up to Big Tobacco, when in fact, they were actually standing shoulder-to-shoulder with Big Tobacco in crafting a law that would only have the appearance of protecting the public's health.

So after three years, the law is working precisely as intended.

Read Dr. Siegel's point-by-point assessment in its entirety here [3].