



MELBOURNE CENTRE FOR BEHAVIOUR CHANGE

E-CIGARETTES IN AUSTRALIA

We interviewed over 30 experts working in tobacco- and nicotine-related policy and practice:



Tobacco control advocates and researchers



Addiction specialists



Politicians, policy-makers, and advisors

We asked them to describe the challenges and opportunities associated with e-cigarettes in Australia

This is what they told us...

CHALLENGES



Youth appeal, uptake, and gateway to smoking

E.g. youth-oriented product packaging and flavourings



Industry interference

E.g. selective presentation of evidence; influencing the evidence base by producing research via third-party organisations and/or funding research academics; lobbying politicians



Marketing and advertising

E.g. below-the-line advertising; industry's "blatant" and "strategic" marketing to youth; inadequacy of the TAP Act



Problematic product features

E.g. mislabelling of nicotine content; lack of safety and quality controls; abuse liability of flavourings; cheap, disposable e-cigarettes

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES



Improved regulation of e-cigarette products and advertising



Continued adoption of the precautionary approach (as per WHO)

E.g. prohibiting retail and online sales; prohibiting non-nicotine e-liquids; implementing product standards for devices; introducing controls on marketing



Provision of education (for health professionals, consumers, parents, and youth)



Greater enforcement of existing e-cigarette laws



Monitoring and exposing industry interference

E.g. increased, proactive compliance monitoring



Closing the Personal Importation Scheme

OPPORTUNITIES

E-cigarettes have the potential to assist with smoking cessation, but:

- 1 E-cigarettes are not a 'silver bullet'
- 2 Use may only be beneficial for some people in **certain circumstances**
- 3 Need to focus on **population-level risk**, not just individual-level benefit
- 4 Should only be available in a highly controlled environment
- Health practitioners must be made aware that e-cigarettes are a second-line treatment for tobacco dependence

E-cigarettes can be provided to those seeking to quit smoking without needing to be made available as a consumer product to the broader community The TGA's scheme provides smokers wishing to quit with access to e-cigarettes and an opportunity to receive behavioural support from their GP while controlling the availability of these products

Source: Jongenelis, M. I. (2023). Challenges and opportunities associated with e-cigarettes in Australia: A qualitative study. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health*. doi: 10.1016/j.anzjph.2022.100006.