

Hello,

I'm writing this submission to be considered for the Parliamentary inquiry on Vaporised Nicotine Products Bill 2017.

Up until 2015, I had been a regular smoker for 15 years. Throughout that time I have tried a number of cessation aids (namely Nicorette gum, patches, then mist-inhalers), all of which were only temporarily effective at best. Nothing has come close to the full cessation of combustible tobacco that Vaping has brought for me. I haven't used a regular cigarette in over 2 years, and my life has changed for the better because of it.

E-Cigarettes are a hugely important tool for harm-reduction amongst the millions of existing Australian tobacco users.

Whilst I agree that the long-term effects of inhaling vapour from these devices is yet to be fully determined, numerous studies have already concluded they are at least less harmful than regular smoking. The Royal College of Physicians in the UK have published a report that concludes;

*"There is a need for regulation to reduce direct and indirect adverse effects of e-cigarette use, **but this regulation should not be allowed significantly to inhibit the development and use of harm-reduction products by smokers.***

*However, **in the interests of public health** it is important to promote the use of e-cigarettes, NRT and other non-tobacco nicotine products as widely as possible as a substitute for smoking in the UK."*

I understand that we need to keep these devices away from minors, and I hope we can find a balance between prohibition and legal sale to adults 18+ or even 21+, just as we do for existing dangerous adult-only items such as Alcohol and Tobacco.

Maybe part of that balance is to limit the Flavour profiles of e-liquid availability and remove excessively sweet, candy-like flavours that teenagers may find appealing, and only allow Tobacco-based, or unflavoured, e-liquids to be stocked on shelves. I would also suggest plain packaging on the bottles, with standardised labels. This would remove the "sweet tooth" and youth-friendly marketing effect of certain e-liquids, while keeping simple and tobacco-substitute options available to those who need this product for health reasons.

The other part is to limit the concentration of Nicotine in e-liquid, only allowing levels that are suitable for vaping, but without the danger associated with high concentrations. A guideline may be 18mg as a maximum, which is similar to the 20mg level Europe has recently specified in it's regulations of the e-liquid market to increase safety without a full prohibition.

But in our haste to keep young developing minds safe from addictive compounds and devices, **we must not keep them away from responsible adult Australians who are looking for a harm-reducing alternative** to an expensive, costly and deadly habit.

Please consider amending the existing position of Nicotine within it's Schedule-7 to ***allow the sale of Nicotine-containing devices and e-liquids to adults within Australia.***

Our public healthcare costs relating to respiratory illness will fall, smoking rates will continue to decline, and millions of existing smokers will see there is a legitimate alternative available that is, at the least, much less harmful.

The alternative, if the existing prohibition on Nicotine is upheld or even escalated, is a black market where hundreds of thousands of vapers and smokers looking to switch will still acquire the devices and e-liquid that they need, in a much less safe manner. With the possibility of legitimate government oversight and regulation, and availability of safe levels of Nicotine-containing e-liquid and devices for adults, the tax income for the government could be substantial, and fill the void that falling tobacco-tax revenue has left.

Please do not succumb to Pharmaceutical-industry lobbying. Their Nicotine-replacement therapy products simply do not work as well as e-cigarettes, and they need to evolve rather than use their power to limit alternative Nicotine-delivery methods outside of their control.

Thank you for reading.