

TGA Submission

My name is Shane Kerrigan, I'm the proud owner of iVape Australia. We have two stores in QLD dedicated to helping people take back their health, wealth and happiness by quitting smoking. My personal journey with vaping started more than 8 years ago after the birth of my youngest son. My wife and I had been smokers all of our adult lives and although we knew the dangers, we had been unable to successfully quit smoking using any of the conventional methods available. We had both tried pills, patches and gum with no joy and had basically resigned to the fact that we were smokers and would probably smoke until tobacco related disease killed us like it does 20,000 Australians each and every year. Sad right! After my youngest was born my wife decided she would try this new "e-cig" thing that she had seen online as she had been of the cigarettes during her pregnancy and this would be a great opportunity to try something new and hopefully not go back to smoking like she had done after the birth of our other two children so we went ahead and purchased our first vapes online and keenly awaited their arrival.

When they finally turned up we had little to no idea how to use them and at this time there wasn't even many videos on YouTube showing how. I remember thinking mine was broken as I couldn't even turn it on. These first moments with our new devices were frustrating to say the least but we persisted and got them working. The e-liquid we had at the time was "non" nicotine and as such I was really struggling. My wife had been without nicotine for 8 months or so of her pregnancy so she was doing ok but I was still smoking all the way through so I was finding it almost impossible to stop smoking and although I had cut back I was still smoking.

Then I ordered e-liquids that contained nicotine.

The very first day I added nicotine to my vape was the last day I had a cigarette. This was a clear game changer. I was getting everything I enjoyed from a cigarette but without the danger that comes with inhaling the byproducts of combustible tobacco. I found the transition easy and have never had a single cigarette since. When my friends that knew me well say that I wasn't smoking anymore with the help of this vaping thingy they were astonished as I was a hardcore smoker and they had a slew of questions including "can you please get me one." We helped our friends out by showing them where we had purchased our devices and helped them through the confusion of how to use their new devices. As our friends found success and stopped smoking, their friends were equally amazed with their ability to remain smoke free and now we were constantly being asked if we could help supply our friends, friends with a vape.

iVape Australia was born.

During the time that we have owned and operated our business we have helped thousands of people discover a new way of life. Free from the perils of combustible tobacco. Not smoking changes your life in a way you could only imagine. The health implications of not smoking are

significant & the money saved (in what is the most expensive country in the world to smoke) is truly life changing. We have seen customers take back their lives and do amazing things for their families with this new found freedom. We have seen people who had previously lived pay check to pay check able to save and payoff credit cards. We have seen people living their dreams in the form of buying nice cars and even houses in some cases. We have seen the massive improvements to people's health, wealth and happiness.

The unprecedented prescription based model proposed by the therapeutic goods administration is not the best way forward for this life saving technology. Whilst I do support sensible, merit based regulations that make our products safer I do not support this presentation based model that will put more red tape in the way and slow or halt the progress made by ex-smokers or vapers. This feels like another blatant attempt by our Australian government to feather their own nests. Our government seems to only be interested in money and not genuinely interested in the health and well-being of its citizens. If this were not true, cigarettes would have been banned 50 years ago. Vaping is the greatest weapon there has ever been in the fight against tobacco harm and should be made more readily available, not made harder to obtain by hiding it behind red tape and tax grabs. Banning importation of e-liquids containing nicotine and passing a prescription based model to supply these products will reduce the availability and variety leading to more Australians being unable to quit smoking and will maintain the status quo which unfortunately is the government making money whilst people die. These "people" are real people with real hopes and dreams. Real people with families that love them. Peoples mums and dads. Peoples brothers and sisters. Real people.

I support sensible regulation of the manufacture and supply of e-liquids containing nicotine.  
I do not support your prescription based model that will retard this life saving technology.

Thank you for taking the time to read my submission.  
If you would like to contact me and further discuss my knowledge of this industry please don't hesitate to reach out. There are not many with such a deep understanding of this industry as my wife and myself. We were one of the first and potentially the longest running vaping retail outlets here in Australia.

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