



Vaping products key messages

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Yorkshire Cancer
Research



What is vaping?

Vaping products are the most popular stop smoking aid in England and offer people who smoke an effective smokefree nicotine alternative. They are a battery-powered device that simulate the sensation of smoking and can give the nicotine to which people are addicted, without the high levels of harmful chemicals found in tobacco smoke. Although addictive, nicotine is not a carcinogen and does not cause cancer.

How vaping can help

There is no safe level of smoking. The best thing that someone who smokes can do for their health is to stop completely and for good. It is never too late to stop. Quitting at any age can lengthen and improve quality of life, even for those with a smoking-related illness.

Tobacco smoke is known to contain at least 80 chemicals which cause cancer and Yorkshire has the second highest percentage of adults who smoke in England. Reducing rates of smoking, to prevent future cancers, is an important factor in helping people in Yorkshire to live long and healthy lives free of cancer.

Alongside behavioural support and licensed stop smoking aids, we believe that vaping products have a significant role to play in reducing the harm from tobacco, supporting people who smoke to quit and thus improving public health. We take this position for two key reasons:

- Because evidence shows that vaping products are far less harmful than smoking.
- Because they are the most popular stop smoking aid in England and there is strong evidence showing they are highly effective in supporting people who smoke to quit.



Policy recommendations

Although vaping products are significantly less harmful than tobacco cigarettes, they are not risk-free and therefore we recommend that people who do not smoke, or who are not at risk of relapsing to smoking, should not vape.

A significant rise in young people vaping is of concern and requires action. Vaping products should not be seen as accessible lifestyle products, but as stop smoking aids.



- Measures to further reduce the accessibility of vaping products to young people, including restricting the sale of vaping products to behind the counter locations and introducing a 'Challenge 25' approach for all tobacco and vaping products.
- Government should utilise powers given by the Tobacco and Vapes Bill as swiftly as possible to close loopholes over vaping product marketing within social media platforms and in sport sponsorship and introduce significant restrictions on youth-targeted branding and packaging.
- Remove current restrictions in place by the ASA and introduce a mandatory statement on vaping products indicating they are intended as a tool to stop smoking.
- Introduce a 'polluter pays' levy to tax the tobacco industry for the harm they cause and utilise the funds realised for stop smoking interventions. This would mean more support to stop smoking is available for those who need it.

Further research is needed to understand if a gateway effect exists, whereby people using vaping products move on to tobacco smoking. Research is also needed to better understand the effects of vaping upon people with cancer.

Our Recommendations

We have a number of recommendations to help people who smoke to access this vital stop smoking tool, whilst also decreasing the appeal for young people. These include:

- Ensuring that every local stop smoking service offers vaping products as part of their smoking cessation provision.
- A public health campaign to dispel myths around vaping and provide a reliable source of information.

