



## NEW NICOTINE ALLIANCE AU

Tobacco Harm Reduction Advocacy Australia

To: The Secretary  
Economic Policy Scrutiny Committee  
Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory  
Wednesday 19th September 2018  
Submission re: Tobacco Control Legislation Amendment Bill 2018

### **About the New Nicotine Alliance Australia**

The New Nicotine Alliance Australia is a not-for-profit organisation, funded by donations from private individuals and organisations. We receive no funding from tobacco, e-cigarette or pharmaceutical companies or their affiliates.

Our board and associate members advocate for responsible, pragmatic regulatory change that would contribute greatly to public health Australia. We wish to see a mature public and organisational understanding as to the potential of less harmful nicotine products, including their safety and efficacy, and hence contribute to the reduction in cigarette smoking.

### **Overview**

The inclusion of vaping (use of e-cigarettes) under smoke-free laws, and treating e-cigarettes like combustible tobacco, is lazy governance that will allow fewer smokers to quit, and result in more smoking-related deaths.

### **Common Myths About Nicotine & Vaping**

We expect you will be inundated with links to peer-reviewed papers, so we will resist doing so ourselves. Instead, we will list common myths attributed to nicotine consumption and to vaping. We can provide further empirical evidence on any statement, upon request.

 0452 195 447

 [info@nnalliance.org.au](mailto:info@nnalliance.org.au)

 20 Earnshaw Street Gladesville NSW 2111 Australia



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- **Sidestream aerosol is dangerous, just like sidestream smoke**  
Not only does the initial (inhaled) aerosol (commonly referred to as vapour) contain a much lower toxic load, but the resulting exhalation is of tiny droplets, and dissipates far more rapidly than cigarette smoke.
- **Nicotine causes cancer**  
No. At worst, nicotine itself has been described as a 'very weak' stimulant containing similar levels to many other substances in our everyday lives. It is the many other carcinogens in tobacco smoke that contribute to cancers. Many from both the science and medical industries, equate the level of nicotine harm to that of caffeine.
- **Vaping is as harmful as smoking**  
Assessments by the Royal College of Physicians, estimate that vaping is unlikely to be more than 5% as harmful as smoking, and probably much less.
- **Vaping is a gateway to smoking**  
The research papers reporting this effect, ignore the real world data that show smoking rates are falling faster in countries which support and encourage vaping. E.G. US & UK allow vaping and are accelerating in the reduction in smoking, while Australian quit figures have flat-lined.
- **We just don't know, and won't know for a long time**  
Despite the possibility of unknown long-term effects, no plausible vectors for these threats have yet been identified. What we know right now is quite extensive - including that the toxic & harmful substances that are in cigarette smoke are typically either orders of magnitude greater than, or entirely absent from, vapourised e-liquid.
- **Vaping is a Big Tobacco plot**  
The modern-day e-cigarette was invented by a pharmacist from China. This development spurred an exponential growth in worldwide manufacturing, and as such, has provided a means for millions of smokers to transition to a far safer alternative.

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Once the tobacco industry realised vaping was a serious threat to sales of combustible cigarettes, they began to purchase established e-cigarette companies, as well as revisiting heat-not-burn products. A number of tobacco companies are also manufacturing their own brands.

Their share in the vaping market is minimal. (e.g. the US-based Juul e-cig is dominating sales of similar products from the tobacco industry).

- **Recommendations**

The inclusion of e-cigarette use in smoke-free laws sends a message that smoking & vaping is of equivalent harm. Since vaping is significantly less harmful, this message should be avoided. There are many smokers who inadvertently have been discouraged from switching.

Businesses and organisations should continue to have the right to decide what is best for their situation. E.G. One cafe might allow vaping only in one section, such as a back room or on the terrace tables. Other cafe proprietors require that vaping simply be discreet, producing no billowing clouds. Businesses not displaying signage to signal accommodation of vaping would be considered 'vape free' short of specific request to do so.

Don't rush in to quash the potential of e-cigs to deliver the tobacco harm reduction potential, viable through getting smokers to switch to much less harmful options. A better time to consider legislation would be after the federal government has legalised the retail sale of nicotine. The federal coalition has just ordered an independent inquiry into the health effects of e-cigarettes.

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- **In Closing**

We hope the people's representatives in the Northern Territory will resist jumping on the bandwagon of 'fear, uncertainty & doubt', set to derail the smoking cessation efforts of many of the states.

Australia's smoking rate was stagnant for the period 2013 – 2016, while the smoking rate in parts of New South Wales and South Australia have risen. Will the people's representatives in the Northern Territory make a decision benefiting the people they represent and encourage smokers to switch to vaping (with or without nicotine)? There are a number of both national and state politicians in Australia who are set to be on the right side of history, advocating a risk proportionate approach to regulating vapour products. Will you be among them?

Sincerely,

Charles Yates, President of the NNA AU

Andrew Thompson, Board Member of the NNA AU

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