

Urgent action needed to stop young people using e-cigarettes



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More and more young Australians are using e-cigarettes. These are harmful to health and can cause nicotine addiction, poisoning, seizures, burns and lung injury. The long-term harms are not yet known. Non-smokers who use e-cigarettes are much more likely to go on to smoke tobacco.

It is legal to sell non-nicotine e-cigarettes to adults in most parts of Australia. However, nicotine e-cigarettes should only be sold to people with a prescription. This law is in place to help protect young people and non-smokers. So why are nicotine e-cigarettes so easy for people to buy?

E-cigarettes may not include 'nicotine' on the label even though they do in fact contain nicotine. Since it's impossible for law enforcement officers to determine whether an e-cigarette product contains nicotine without laboratory testing, large numbers of e-cigarettes containing nicotine can be imported, stored in warehouses, sold in shops and supplied to young people without detection.

To close this loophole, the supply of so-called 'non-nicotine' e-cigarettes must end. Imports of all e-cigarettes should be banned unless they are bound for smokers with a prescription or pharmacy wholesalers. Non-nicotine e-cigarettes are not harmless products and contain hundreds of harmful chemicals.

This is a rapidly accelerating public health crisis. Cancer Council and other public health groups call on governments to take immediate action—before it is too late.

The Australian government must:

- take stronger action at the Australian border to stop the flood of nicotine e-cigarette products entering the country
- ban the importation of all e-cigarette products unless bound for smokers with a prescription or pharmacy wholesalers
- ban the supply of all e-cigarette products at the national level (regardless of whether they contain nicotine), except by pharmacies to smokers with a prescription

State and territory governments must:

- crackdown on illegal retail sales and warehousing of nicotine e-cigarette products
- ban the supply of all e-cigarette products, except by pharmacies to smokers with a prescription (to support a national ban)

All governments must:

- ban all forms of advertising, promotion and sponsorship of e-cigarette products.

Developed by Cancer Council's Tobacco Issues Committee

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AUSTRALIAN CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION ALLIANCE

