

Australian Medical Association Limited

ABN 37 008 426 793

42 Macquarie Street, Barton ACT 2600: PO Box 6090, Kingston ACT 2604
 Telephone: (02) 6270 5400 Facsimile (02) 6270 5499
 Website : <http://www.ama.com.au/>



NO EVIDENCE THAT E-CIGARETTES STOP PEOPLE SMOKING

The AMA believes that there is currently no compelling evidence that e-cigarettes are successful in helping people to stop smoking, and they should remain subject to strong regulation in Australia.

In its submission to the Standing Committee on Health, Aged Care and Sport *Inquiry into the Use and Marketing of Electronic Cigarettes and Personal Vaporisers in Australia*, the AMA says that the tobacco industry is aggressively pursuing the potential of new products, including e-cigarettes, which can either maintain or establish a nicotine addiction in users.

AMA President, Dr Michael Gannon, said today that the growth in e-cigarette products internationally has provided sections of the tobacco industry with the opportunity to rebrand themselves as part of the effort to reduce smoking – but there is no evidence that e-cigarettes work as a deterrent.

“Smoking causes cancer and smoking kills people,” Dr Gannon said.

“Australia is a world leader in tobacco control, and we must remain a world leader in stopping people smoking or taking up smoking for the first time.

“We must not allow e-cigarettes to become a socially acceptable alternative to smoking.

“E-cigarettes essentially mimic or normalise the act of smoking. They can result in some smokers delaying their decision to quit, and they can send signals to children and young people that it is okay to smoke.

“E-cigarettes and related products should only be available to people over 18 years of age. The marketing and advertising of e-cigarettes should be subject to the same restrictions as cigarettes.

“And, importantly, e-cigarettes must not be allowed to be marketed with claims that they are a smoking cessation aid. There is no such evidence.

“Australian authorities have not been able to establish any proof that e-cigarettes are safe or effective in stopping people smoking.”

Dr Gannon said that longitudinal research being conducted by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) into the safety or otherwise of e-cigarettes is ongoing and will take time.

“Until we see comprehensive clinical reports from the NHMRC on the safety or non-safety of e-cigarettes, we must continue to treat these products with extreme caution,” Dr Gannon said.

The AMA submission is available at <https://ama.com.au/submission/ama-submission-standing-committee-health-aged-care-and-sport-inquiry-use-and-marketing>

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CONTACT: John Flannery 02 6270 5477 / 0419 494 761
 Maria Hawthorne 02 6270 5478 / 0427 209 753