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E-CIGARETTES SHOULD FACE SAME RESTRICTIONS AS TOBACCO PRODUCTS

AMA Position Statement on Tobacco Smoking and E-Cigarettes 2015

The AMA today released its updated *Position Statement on Tobacco Smoking and E-Cigarettes 2015*, which replaces the *AMA Position Statement on Tobacco Smoking 2005*, and incorporates the AMA’s policy position on e-cigarettes.

AMA President, Professor Brian Owler, said the AMA wants the Federal Government to work with the States and Territories to introduce nationally-consistent controls and restrictions on the marketing and advertising of E-cigarettes.

“While some States have taken a strong stance on E-Cigarettes, others have not, which sends conflicting messages to consumers,” Professor Owler said.

“The AMA is concerned that E-Cigarettes are particularly appealing to young people, and the marketing of these products builds on this appeal.

“The promotion of E-Cigarettes to young people as recreational products has the potential to undermine tobacco control efforts, and normalise the act of smoking.

“The AMA believes that E-Cigarettes should not be sold to anyone under 18 years of age.

“E-Cigarettes should not be marketed as smoking cessation aids, because this is not currently supported by evidence.

“We recommend that the marketing and advertising restrictions that apply to tobacco products should also apply to E-Cigarettes.

“A nationally consistent approach is needed to stamp out any products or marketing that make smoking in any form appear attractive,” Professor Owler said.

The Position Statement makes a number of recommendations to help reduce the number of smokers in Australia, including:

- expanding designated smoke free areas;
- refining and extending plain tobacco packaging;
- reducing exposure to tobacco advertising;
- providing increased cessation support for pregnant women who smoke; and
- continuing with efforts to prevent children and young people from ever smoking, such as increasing the price of tobacco and cigarettes.

Professor Owler said that increasing the price of cigarettes is known to be a strong deterrent for smokers.

“We know that every time the price of cigarettes increases, some smokers quit the killer habit, and non-smokers are prevented from taking up smoking,” Professor Owler said.

“It is important that smoking deterrent messages and information are readily available to help people stop smoking, and convince others not to take up the habit.

“GPs are a great source of information and advice for smokers who wish to quit.

“There is evidence that the provision of smoking cessation advice from health professionals can assist smokers to quit.”

Background

- tobacco is unique among consumer products in that it causes disease and premature death when used as intended;
- smoking directly contributes to more deaths and hospitalisations than alcohol and illicit drug use combined;
- smoking is a significant risk factor for coronary disease, stroke, peripheral vascular disease, respiratory disease, and cancer;
- each year, about 15,000 Australians die as a result of tobacco smoking; and
- two out of three smokers will die as a result of their smoking

The AMA Position Statement on Tobacco Smoking and E-Cigarettes is at <https://ama.com.au/position-statement/tobacco-smoking-and-e-cigarettes-2015>

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