

# PHE's (now OHID) Seventh Independent E-Cigarette Review



# Aim of Review

## Terminology:

The term ‘**vaping products**’ describes e-cigarettes and refill containers/ e-liquids

- Seventh report in a series of independent reviews commissioned by PHE to summarise evidence on vaping products to inform policies and regulation
- Smoking remains the largest single risk factor for death and years of life lived in ill-health and is a leading cause of health inequalities in England
- Alternative nicotine delivery devices, such as nicotine vaping products, could play a crucial role in reducing the enormous health burden caused by cigarette smoking



# COVID-19 and Recent Developments

- COVID-19 has had a devastating impact worldwide, and has also likely affected both vaping and smoking behaviours in England
- The pandemic is the subject of ongoing research and it is too early to assess the full impact on vaping and smoking
- The UK government has committed to review the ‘Tobacco and Related Products Regulations (TRPR)’ (**which govern nicotine vaping products**) sometime in 2022, to assess whether the regulations have met their objectives
- The government’s tobacco control plan for England, which sets out ambitions for 2022, remains in place, although a new tobacco control plan for England is expected to be published in summer 2022.



# What We Know Since the 2016 TRPR Implementation

- The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) received 231 reports of 618 adverse reactions believed to be associated with nicotine containing vaping products
- Each report represents a person for whom more than one adverse reaction could have been reported
  - **A report is not proof that the reaction was caused by a vaping product, just that the reporter thought it might have been**
- A safety review by the Committee on Toxicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COT) concluded that the risk of adverse health effects from vaping products **is expected to be much lower than from cigarettes**
- However, the review also found that exposure to particulate matter and nicotine could be associated with adverse health effects **and that the effects of inhaling flavouring ingredients is uncertain.**



# Vaping Among Young People

Data were collected in September 2019 (from the ITC Youth survey) and in 2020 (from the ASH-Youth survey).

- **ASH-Youth survey data (11 to 18 year olds) showed:**
- Smoking prevalence (including those who smoked sometimes or more than once a week) in March 2020 was 6.7% (compared with 6.3% in March 2019) and has changed little since 2015 when it was 7.1%
- little change in levels of vaping over the last few years with current vaping - prevalence being 4.8% in March 2020, the same as in March 2019
- **The ITC Youth survey data (16 to 19 year olds) showed:**
- Smoking prevalence at 6.2% (defined as smoking more than 100 cigarettes in their life and having smoked in the past 30 days)
- Current vaping prevalence at 7.7% (defined as vaping on more than 10 days in their lifetime and having vaped in the past 30 days)



# YP Continued.....

- Based on the socioeconomic status of 11 to 18 year olds, the estimates for smoking and vaping prevalence were higher among more advantaged groups (7.1% for smoking, 5.3% for vaping) than for more disadvantaged groups (5.7% for smoking, 3.5% for vaping)
- Most young people who had never smoked had also never vaped. Between 0.8% and 1.3% of young people who had never smoked were current vapers
- Most current vapers were either former or current smokers
- The main reasons for vaping were to:
  - “give it a try”
  - “for fun/I like it”
  - “liking the flavours”
  - Of the 11 to 18 year olds who vaped, 11.9% reported doing so to quit smoking
- Three-quarters of current vapers aged 11 to 17 bought their vaping products despite sales to under-18s and proxy purchases being illegal.
- Under half (43%) of 11 to 18 year olds who were current and former vapers reported always using vaping products that contained nicotine



# YP Conclusions

- Vaping and smoking prevalence among young people in England both appear to have stayed the same in recent years and should continue to be closely monitored
- Enforcement of age of sale regulations for vaping (and smoking) needs to be improved
- Misperceptions of the relative harms of smoking and vaping should be addressed
- More research is needed on the addictiveness of different types and strengths of nicotine vaping products among young people and the extent to which they are using illegal products
- Locally in Barnsley, we have a questions added to the Relationship & Sex Education Portal for schools that include smoking and vaping behaviours



# Vaping Among Adults

**Data reported came from 4 different surveys. Most data were from the smoking tool kit study (STS), collected between January and October 2020, and the ASH-Adult survey, collected in February and March 2020. Other data were collected in 2019**

- Smoking prevalence among adults in England continues to fall and was between 13.8% and 16.0% depending on the survey, equating to about 6 to 7 million smokers
  - There was some variation in smoking prevalence by socio-demographics, such as a higher prevalence among adults from more disadvantaged groups
- Vaping prevalence was lower than smoking prevalence across all groups and continues to be around 6% - equating to about 2.7 million adult vapers in England
- Vaping prevalence was between 17.5% and 20.1% among current smokers, around 11% among former smokers and between 0.3% and 0.6% among never smokers. Around 10% of long-term former smokers (quit for longer than 1 year) vaped, compared with 24% of short-term former smokers (quit for less than 1 year).





# Adult Continued.....

- The proportion of vapers who also smoke has declined since 2012, from 74% to 38% in the ASH-Adult survey, and from 92% to 51% in the STS survey
- Among long-term former smokers, a decreasing proportion used nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) – an increasing proportion used vaping products, between 2013 and 2020
- The proportion of current vapers who have vaped for more than 3 years appears to be increasing
- The most common reasons for vaping reported in the ASH-Adult survey were to: quit (29.7%), stay off (19.4%) or reduce (11.2%) smoking tobacco



# Adult Conclusions

- The proportion of long-term vapers is increasing over time and further research into this group is needed
- A greater emphasis needs to be placed on how best to communicate evidence of relative harm to smokers so that they can consider all the options available to them to quit smoking completely
- Vaping is more common among more disadvantaged adult groups in society. This mirrors smoking prevalence, and research should continue to explore the effect this has on health inequalities
- Further research should be carried out on addiction among vapers of different types of vaping products, nicotine types and flavours used



# Effect of Vaping on Smoking Cessation and Reduction

The following are the main findings from nationally representative survey data - STS

- Using a vaping product is the most popular aid used by people trying to quit smoking. In 2020, 27.2% of people used a vaping product in a quit attempt in the previous 12 months. This compares with 15.5% who used NRT
- Vaping is positively associated with quitting smoking successfully. In 2017, over 50,000 smokers stopped smoking with a vaping product who would otherwise have carried on smoking
- Prescription medications (NRT) were also positively associated with successfully quitting smoking
  - **This shows how important it is for people who smoke to have access to a wide choice of cessation aids**
- The extensive use of vaping products in quit attempts compared with licensed medication suggests vaping products may reach more people who smoke and therefore have more impact than NRT
- Quit rates involving a vaping product were higher than any other method in every region in England. These ranged from 49% in the South West to 78% in Yorkshire and the Humber.



# Questions?



**BARNLSLEY**  
Metropolitan Borough Council