



POSITION STATEMENT

June 2023

Reducing Tobacco and E-Cigarette Harm

Ballarat Community Health (BCH) supports and promotes the reduction of tobacco and e-cigarette harm within our community.



Announcement from the Federal Government - May 2023

BCH welcomes the announcement from the Federal Government in May 2023 around the measures proposed to tackle smoking and vaping in our communities and the commitment to protect children and young people in Australia from the harms of e-cigarettes.

BCH supports the Federal Government's commitment to:

- Ban the sale of all single use disposable e-cigarettes.
- Introduce minimum quality standards on certain flavours, colours and ingredients and reducing allowable nicotine content.
- Raise public awareness about the health impacts of e-cigarettes.
- Prohibit advertising, promotion, and sponsorship of e-cigarettes.
- Monitor and prevent illegal importation and supply of non-prescription e-cigarettes in Australia.²⁰

Role of Ballarat Community Health (BCH)

- BCH is a member of the Victorian Network of Smoke Free Healthcare Services, committed to the delivery of safe quality care and information in relation to tobacco use, e-cigarette use and nicotine dependence.

- BCH supports the e-cigarette reforms introduced in 2017 by the Victorian Government and more recent measures proposed by the Federal Government in May 2023. These reforms aim to protect children and young people from accessing and using e-cigarettes by regulating all e-cigarette products in the same way it does tobacco products.
- BCH delivers health promotion to reduce tobacco related harm (including advocating for smoke and vape free living) and individual smoking cessation support.
- BCH supports Quitline’s Brief Advice model - Ask, Advise, Help (AAH) and provides training to staff by raising the topic of smoking and vaping with clients, associated harms and offers early intervention support to individuals in need of assistance.²⁵

Key Messages

Smoking is the leading preventable cause of death and disease in Australia.¹

Smoking leads to a wide range of diseases including many types of cancer, heart disease and stroke, chest and lung illnesses and stomach ulcers. It claims the lives of around 24,000 Australians every year.²¹

Chop-chop (loose/home grown tobacco) poses a significant health risk and can cause a range of illnesses, including allergic reactions and lung disease.⁶

The most effective way to quit is to access Behavioural intervention support, e.g., QUITLINE and use Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT).²²

If you use NRT, a combination of the nicotine patch and a faster-acting product such as nicotine mouth spray or gum is the most effective.²²

E-cigarettes can be harmful to health, particularly for non-smokers, children and adolescents and increases the risks of adverse health outcomes, including addiction, poisoning, toxicity, and lung injury.^{9,14,15}

Growing international research shows vaping increases the risk of mood and anxiety disorders and can worsen symptoms of depression.²³

Many e-liquids labelled as ‘non-nicotine’ have been found to contain nicotine.¹³

There is limited evidence that Nicotine Vaping Products (NVPs) are an effective aid for quitting smoking compared with Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) or usual care.^{14,24}



e-liquid ingredients

Chemicals and solvents including nickel, tin, arsenic, chlorine, lead, flavourings and nicotine (inclusion of nicotine affects vape legal status)¹³

Direct harm from vaping

-Nicotine poisoning
 -Popcorn lung
 -Associated Lung Injury (EVALI)
 -Respiratory damage (from chemical and heavy metal inhalation)¹⁵

Secondary impact of vaping

-Potential passive inhalation of chemicals from nearby vaping
 -Evidence of increase in e-cigarette airborne particulate matter pollution in indoor environments¹⁶

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