



## Electronic Cigarettes and Vaping

### A brief guide for schools

August 2018

Nicotine Vaping Products (NVPs or e-cigarettes) have been available for just over a decade in Scotland. There are particular considerations for schools and settings engaging with young people on this issue.

#### What are e-cigarettes?

- E-cigarettes are battery powered devices that heat a liquid into a vapour, which is then inhaled by the user (often containing nicotine and flavourings)
- some e-cigarettes are smaller and 'cigarette like', larger 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> generation e-cigarettes typically do not look like normal cigarettes and have higher powered batteries and refillable liquid tanks

#### Are young people using e-cigarettes?

- There is very little Scottish or UK data on e-cigarette use among children and young people. Surveys so far have consistently found use is rare and mostly confined to young people who already smoke
- recent SALSUS surveys of 13 and 15 year olds indicate that some young people are engaging in experimentation with e-cigarettes, but not many are regular users
- e-cigarette use amongst young people who have never smoked is very low
- there is some evidence that young people who have vaped but never smoked are more likely subsequently to smoke, but there is no evidence that this relationship is causal. The UK has good data on this issue from surveys.

#### What are the concerns about e-cigarettes?

- There is now agreement based on current evidence that vaping e-cigarettes is **definitely less harmful** and risky than smoking tobacco
- vaping is **not risk free** and there are no long term studies on the health effects of e-cigarettes
- most e-cigarettes contain nicotine, which is addictive
- there are concerns that e-cigarettes may attract non-smokers, including young people, creating a new route of smoking initiation for young people
- tobacco companies are increasingly involved in e-cigarette manufacture and sale.

#### Do e-cigarettes help people to quit smoking?

- There is still a lack of high quality data about how useful e-cigarettes are for helping people to stop smoking
- access to nicotine containing products can be useful for smokers who wish to stop



- e-cigarettes can deliver nicotine to the body, although much more slowly than smoking
- using e-cigarettes without stopping smoking (dual use) does not provide health benefits
- expert support and medicinal treatments have the strongest evidence base to help people stop smoking
- Scotland's stop smoking services are free and have lots of help at hand to support people to quit smoking: [www.quityourway.scot](http://www.quityourway.scot).

### The legal situation

- it's illegal to sell nicotine vaping products to under 18s, or to buy them on their behalf
- anyone who looks under 25 trying to buy vaping products should be asked to show ID
- any business selling nicotine containing vaping products must be on the Tobacco Register
- there are no legal restrictions on vaping indoors, although many premises do not allow it.

### Advice for schools

It's recommended that schools approach e-cigarettes as they would with any other age restricted product. When including e-cigarettes within your school's smoke-free policy consider:

- prohibiting use by all staff, pupils and visitors on school grounds
- discouraging experimentation with vaping devices, particularly amongst non-smokers
- taking opportunities to provide good information on e-cigarettes and engage young people in conversations about tobacco and health more widely
- recognising that all school staff are role models for young people and they should refrain from using e-cigarettes in front of young people
- remember that tobacco and tobacco smoke are more harmful. For example, avoid situations where e-cigarette users are obliged to share a space with smokers.

### Resources for working with young people

ASH Scotland's [Tobacco-free Schools Resource Pack](#) contains classroom activities designed to help teachers address the issue of e-cigarettes with young people, covering the benefits, risks, the legalities and how e-cigarettes are marketed.

Action on Smoking & Health (Scotland) (ASH Scotland) is a registered Scottish charity (SC 010412) and a company limited by guarantee (Scottish company no 141711)

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