

Lesson 3

Should NOT be banned

<p>The Government recently announced its new swap to stop scheme which will support smokers to stop through providing a million vape starter kits. The benefit of these scheme will be maximised if smokers accurately understand how much less harmful than smoking vaping is.</p> <p>Four in ten smokers incorrectly believe vaping is as or more harmful than smoking up from a third last year and one in five in 2019. So, smokers already have established false perceptions about the harms from vaping compared to smoking. A ban on disposable vapes, while smoked tobacco remains legal, may reinforce these misperceptions.</p>	<p>The initial cost of a refillable vape device may be too costly for some people...</p> <p><i>"Because they are cheap, disposable vaping products are useful for people on low incomes, or homeless people who can't often recharge standard vaping pens... Bans on disposable products have good intentions, but they risk drawing the focus away from the real problem: vaping is currently marketed as a lifestyle product, when it should be promoted, regulated and funded as a stop-smoking aid."</i></p> <p>(Yorkshire Cancer Research)</p>	<p>Australia have recently banned disposable vapes and they are only available via prescription. Some have suggested that if the UK follow suit, the NHS may be overburdened with the number of people requiring prescribed vapes.</p>
<p>Disposable vapes are valuable for some vulnerable groups of smokers such as those with dexterity issues, with learning difficulties and detained in mental health settings.</p> <p><i>'...because disposable vapes are more difficult to dismantle or tamper with, they are useful stop-smoking aids in institutions such as prisons and inpatient mental health services.</i></p> <p>(Yorkshire Cancer Research)</p>	<p>Disposable vapes may be a valuable tool in helping the UK meet their smokefree goals.</p> <p>Deborah Arnott, Chief Executive of Action on Smoking and Health says:</p> <p><i>"Smoking is a drain on society. It's a cost to individuals in terms of their health and wealth and a cost to us all because it undermines the productivity of our economy and places additional burdens on our NHS and care services... The Government have delayed the tobacco control plan it promised last year which is now urgently needed with only 8 years left to achieve the goal of England being smokefree by 2030."</i></p>	<p>While there is a cost to disposable vapes, this may still be less than cigarettes (depending on usage) and may help people quit.</p> <p>Ending smoking in the UK could lift over a million people out of poverty. Despite the obvious concerns with disposable vapes, the overall benefit to society will be huge if smokers can quit.</p>
<p>While e-cigarettes cause waste, so do regular cigarettes. A recent report by the United Nations showed that the global tobacco industry costs the world 600 million trees, 200,000 hectares of land, and 22 billion tonnes of water every single year. It's also responsible for 84 million tonnes of CO2, which is the equivalent of the annual emissions of 13.3 million UK residents.</p> <p>The filters used in cigarettes, which do not degrade, create around 1.8 million tonnes of waste a year. Plastic fibres made from cellulose acetate in the filters break down into microplastics that can leak into water supplies and the ocean, harming marine life and making its way into the food chain. 4.5 trillion cigarette butts are discarded globally!</p>	<p>Smoking prematurely kills 96,000 people a year in the UK... more than obesity, alcohol, road accidents, drug use and HIV combined.</p> <p>The cost of smoking to society totals £17.04bn for England each year! Disposable vapes can encourage smokers to quit, saving the NHS a huge amount of money and helping the government reach its target, to be smoke free by 2030.</p>	<p>A ban could see an illegal market grow and fail to significantly reduce levels of use.</p> <p>For example after Bhutan banned the sale of tobacco in 2004, the illegal market ballooned and child smoking rates went up, not down.</p>
<p>Rather than banning disposable vapes, there could be better enforcement so that teenagers are unable to access them.</p> <p>Backed by £3 million of government funding, the new 'illicit vapes enforcement squad' will enforce the rules on vaping and tackle illegal vapes and underage sales.</p>	<p>Recycling of disposable vaping products is currently challenging and expensive but possible. More investment is needed to put in place effective processes and ensure the public recycle products. Currently the legal market can be compelled to pay for the development of solutions, for the costs associated with any recycling schemes and to promote use of the scheme by consumers. If products are banned, then it will fall to the government (national and local) to cover the full costs of developing recycling solutions and paying for the recycling of illegal products.</p>	<p>Rather than banning disposable vapes, the government could tax them (ASH suggest a £5 tax per disposable vape). This would mean that their price would be the same as the equivalent re-usable product, thus encouraging more people to use reusable vapes instead.</p>