

Disposable E-Cigarettes

Use and appeal for smoking cessation in adults

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Introduction

Disposable e-cigarettes – single use, pre-filled devices that are ready to use and require no charging or refilling – are used by approx. 2.4 million adults in the UK as a way to quit smoking. However, an increase in disposable use by under 18s and people who do not smoke is of concern. It is important to explore how a balance can be struck between protecting these groups, whilst still supporting adults to quit smoking.

Methods: In-depth interviews with 40 participants from a demographically diverse sample of UK adults with different histories of smoking and disposable e-cigarette use.

Findings

The main reason for the use of disposable e-cigarettes over other vaping products was the **convenience, low initial cost, ease of use and access**. Others thought that rechargeable e-cigarettes would be more affordable long term.

“A cheat code to quit smoking”: Disposable e-cigarettes replace the sensations of smoking, acting as an effective quitting tool.



Vaping was mostly considered **more socially acceptable** than smoking; however others thought that their choice to vape had little influence on their relationships and social behaviour.



Concerns about **youth uptake, nicotine addiction and potential unknown long-term health harms** of vaping were raised.



There were **mixed views on health impact**: some saw e-cigarettes as a healthier alternative to smoking, whilst others reported negative health impacts from vaping (i.e. nausea and coughing).



The **environmental impact** of disposables vapes was of concern, with low awareness of proper disposal and recycling of disposable e-cigarettes.



Further restrictions were welcomed as a way to prevent young people from accessing disposable e-cigarettes. However, any increased restrictions on disposable e-cigarettes was thought to indicate that they were more harmful than cigarettes, and more harmful than originally considered.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Cancer Research UK is calling on the UK and devolved Governments to:

- ✓ Ensure people who smoke still have access to a wide range of cessation options, including refillable/reusable e-cigarettes.
- ✓ Reduce vaping in young people and those who have never smoked.
- ✓ Ensure regulation is fit for purpose and effectively enforced.