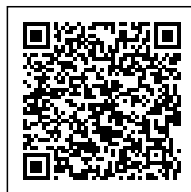




OPINION - PUBLIC HEALTH ENGLAND REPORT: E-CIGARETTES HELP SMOKERS QUIT

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A new report from Britain's top public health organization adds to the growing mountain of evidence that vaping, e-cigarettes, and "heat-not-burn" alternatives are effective tools for getting cigarette smokers to quit, significantly lowering their health risks. The new evidence update recently released by Public Health England (PHE) also reconfirms that health risks from vaping are 95 percent lower than traditional combustible cigarettes.

It's a message many anti-tobacco activists in the U.S. continue to resist.

PHE, the British government's equivalent to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in the U.S., also reconfirmed the finding that vaping is at least 95 percent safer than smoking.

This is the seventh independent review of data by tobacco control and substance abuse experts at King's College London on behalf of the PHE, the British government's equivalent to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. One key finding: vaping products that contain nicotine were the most popular aid products used by smokers trying to quit in England in 2020.

The report also found more than 50,000 smokers stopped smoking in 2017 through the aid of a vaping product. This despite the fact 38 percent of smokers still erroneously believe vaping is as harmful as traditional smoking. Indeed, 15 percent believe vaping is *more* harmful.

"The best thing that a smoker can do is to stop smoking completely and the evidence shows that vaping is one of the most effective quit aids available, helping around 50,000 smokers quit a year," said John Newton, the director of health improvement at PHE. "The evidence has been clear for some time that, while not risk-free vaping is far less harmful than smoking."

Newton's remarks are profound, considering the sentiments surrounding e-cigarette use in the United States. Former President Donald Trump presided over policy that directly harmed the product category and its potential as a risk-reduced nicotine product. Under Trump, thousands of premarket tobacco product applications are holed up by the Food and Drug Administration's Center for Tobacco Products. He also oversaw the limitation of flavored pod products at the national level and took advice from medical and public health advisors who staunchly opposed the potential benefits of electronic cigarettes.

"Today's report from Public Health England is great news for vapers," said Michael Landl, the director of the World Vaper's Alliance, told

InsideSources. “We have further confirmation vaping is a way out of smoking. Those who continue to claim that vaping is a gateway to smoking should take the time to read the science.”



Though he represents a consumer group based in the European Union, Landl notes that PHE’s findings run counter to the alarmist messages many governments use to curtail cigarette use. “‘Listen to the science’ is something we’ve heard a lot lately with COVID but hopefully those that continually criticise vaping will this time,” said Landl. “They cannot continue to pick and choose the science that suits them.”

Many anti-tobacco advocates concede that moving from traditional cigarettes to other options, like “heat-not-burn” and vaping, is an improvement for adults. However, they claim vaping presents a risk to children — teens in particular.

“Rightly, since e-cigarettes emerged as an alternative to smoking, the government has sought to strike a balance between helping smokers to quit and protecting children,” said Deborah Arnott, the CEO of ASH UK — a tobacco control advocacy group in England. “As ASH research included in the report for PHE shows, e-cigarette use among 11 to 18-year-olds has to date remained low, but on the downside, their potential as an adult quitting aid has not been fully realised.”

Still, anti-tobacco groups continue to lobby against vaping and other smoking alternatives, despite the significant difference in health risks. Their approach is to promote total prohibition, rather than risk reduction. This report, says David Sweanor, a professor of law at the University of Ottawa, in Canada, should inform the U.S. tobacco control establishment of the benefits of e-cigarettes for adults looking for an off-ramp from smoking.

“With there being so much manufactured confusion and media focus on scare stories and bad science, there is a huge need for a highly reputable health authority to provide an authoritative summary of the facts,” Sweanor told InsideSources. “Public Health England does this consistently and admirably.”