

New vaping to quit smoking website launches

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The website was developed by the Ministry of Health and the Health Promotion Agency with input from a New Zealand expert advisory group.



A new website (vapingfacts.health.nz) is being launched today by Associate Minister of Health Jenny Salesa to provide New Zealanders with a source of clear and credible information about vaping as a way to stop smoking.

“In New Zealand, 5,000 people die each year from smoking-related illnesses. While vaping products are not harmless to health, they are much less harmful than smoking,” says Jenny Salesa.

“This website will provide a centralised, credible source of information, with facts and advice on vaping in New Zealand. We know through Google data there is a massive unmet need of search requests for information on vaping. The ‘vapingfacts’ website means people won’t have to resort to unreliable sources like YouTube videos and overseas sites.

“It is designed for adults who smoke and their whānau, as well as people with questions about what vaping is and how it is different from smoking.

“Many people miss the nicotine when they quit smoking. Vaping can replace this nicotine but without the toxins found in cigarette smoke. The combustion of the chemicals found in cigarette smoke is what causes almost all of the harm from tobacco.

“The benefits of a smoker switching to vaping include reducing the risks to their health and the health of their children, reducing the likelihood that their children will become smokers, and a lot more money left in the pocket.

“There are significant inequalities in smoking rates in New Zealand among Māori and Pacific people. Māori women in particular experience the highest rates of smoking.

“In September we will be rolling out a targeted campaign to help raise awareness of vaping as a way to stop smoking. Māori women are the focus of this campaign due to their high smoking rate: 32.5% compared with the country's total rate of 13.8%.

“Some people worry that vaping might be a ‘gateway’ to smoking for young people, but there is no clear evidence for this. Smoking among young people is continuing to decline and most young people who vape are smokers or ex-smokers.

“This Government will put appropriate legislation in place to improve the regulation of vaping and smokeless tobacco products. I am looking forward to bringing draft legislation to the House later this year.”

CONSENSUS STATEMENT

The website was developed by the Ministry of Health and the Health Promotion Agency with input from a New Zealand expert advisory group. This consensus statement has been agreed:

- The best thing you can do for your health is to be smokefree and vape free.
- Vaping is not for children or young people.
- Vaping can help some people quit smoking.
- Vaping is not harmless but is much less harmful than smoking.
- Vaping is not for non-smokers.

Some highlights of the media statement by Jenny Salesa, Minister for Health, New Zealand

- **“Many people miss the nicotine when they quit smoking. Vaping can replace this nicotine but without the toxins found in cigarette smoke. The combustion of the chemicals found in cigarette smoke is what causes almost all of the harm from tobacco.**
- **“There needs to be some really careful thought and consideration given to how they allow it to be marketed and where and when those advertisements are placed, whether it's on-air, in the shops, in the stores, or online etc.”**
- **“Some people worry that vaping might be a ‘gateway’ to smoking for young people, but there is no clear evidence for this. Smoking among young people is continuing to decline and most young people who vape are smokers or ex-smokers.”**

Vaping is a disruptive technology that has significant potential to reduce cigarette use amongst adult smokers as it can provide nicotine delivery to habitual smokers in the same way as a cigarette would without the presence of active carcinogens. This alternative is becoming expansively popular around the world and governments should take cue from countries that have encouraged vaping and have devised effective regulations to inform smokers about the fact of vaping and help them to make the switch. India should also use a combination of regulatory and programmatic awareness tools to help existing smokers make an informed choice about their health and devise regulations for the ENDS industry.