

# E-cigarettes and Children in Care

## KEY MESSAGES for the LAC Nurses Network

**E-cigarette use is not recommended for young people**

**In the UK protection is in place via prohibitions on the sale of e-cigarettes to under-18s and purchase by adults on behalf of under-18s, and restrictions on advertising.**

(Important to note that similar restrictions apply to tobacco)

“Managers of child and youth settings ... have a particular responsibility in managing the risk of youth uptake of e-cigarettes and might want to treat e-cigarettes as they would any other age-restricted product.”

**PHE (2016) Use of e-cigarettes in public places and workplaces. Advice to inform evidence-based policy making, page 8**

“While it is preferable for young people neither to smoke nor to vape, when assessing the risks policies should give priority to supporting young people not to smoke.”

**PHE (2016) Use of e-cigarettes in public places and workplaces. Advice to inform evidence-based policy making, page 9**

“While vaping may not be 100% safe, most of the chemicals causing smoking-related disease are absent and the chemicals that are present pose limited danger. It had previously been estimated that EC [e-cigarettes] are around 95% safer than smoking. This appears to remain a reasonable estimate.”

**PHE (2015) McNeill et al, E-cigarettes: an evidence update**

- E-cigarettes are the most commonly used stop smoking aid among adults in England
- Among young people, while experimentation with e-cigarettes is fairly common, regular use is rare and almost entirely confined to those who have already smoked
- E-cigarette use is not recommended for young people
- It is illegal in the UK to sell e-cigarette products to under-18s
- It is illegal for an adult to ‘proxy purchase’ e-cigarettes for a young person
- Based on the available evidence, e-cigarette use carries a fraction of the risk of smoking
- Risk to the health of bystanders from second-hand e-cigarette vapour is extremely low
- There is no evidence so far that e-cigarettes are acting as a route into smoking for young people or non-smokers
- It is important to make a clear distinction between vaping and smoking
- The public perception of harm associated with e-cigarettes (and nicotine) in contrast to smoking tobacco is becoming increasingly inaccurate
- We have a responsibility to provide clear information on the evidence we have, to encourage complete smoking cessation and help prevent relapse to smoking
- This is a rapidly developing field and continued vigilance and research in this area are needed

## Bibliography and further information

1. [PHE 2014 independent evidence reviews: Britton & Bogdanovica, Electronic Cigarettes and Bauld et al, E-cigarette uptake and marketing](#)
2. [PHE 2015 independent evidence review: McNeill et al, E-cigarettes: an evidence update](#) (the 'authors' note' setting out the background for the 95% less harmful estimate and the 'firm foundations for evidence-based policy and practice' can also be accessed from this page)
3. [PHE consensus statements – September 2015 and July 2016](#)
4. [PHE A new foundation for evidence-based policy and practice](#)
5. [PHE 2016 Working together to promote cessation of smoking in children & young people](#) - Commissioner guide on CAMHS
6. [Royal College of Physicians 2016 report: Nicotine without smoke: Tobacco harm reduction](#)
7. [PHE advice on the use of e-cigarettes in public places and workplaces](#) (the main doc and the one-page 'five point guide' can be accessed from this webpage)
8. [NCSCT briefing on e-cigarettes for stop smoking practitioners](#)
9. Smoking in Pregnancy Challenge Group [Use of electronic cigarettes in pregnancy: a guide for midwives and other healthcare professionals](#)
10. ROSPA, CFOA et al, [Use of e-cigarettes \(vaping\) in the home: advice for parents](#)
11. ASH [Use of electronic cigarettes \(vaporisers\) among adults in Great Britain 2016](#)
12. ASH [Use of Electronic Cigarettes among Children in Great Britain 2016](#)
13. ASH [E-cigarette Briefing](#)
14. ASH A Mental Health and Smoking Action Report - [The Stolen Years](#)
15. [Smoking Toolkit Study – monthly tracking statistics](#)
16. [NHS Choices content on e-cigarettes](#)
17. [NHS Smokefree content on e-cigarettes](#)
18. [PHE 'Public Health Matters' Blog](#) - a commentary on the Public Health Response to e-cigarettes