



## Health and Environment Committee

### Report No. 38, 57<sup>th</sup> Parliament, *Vaping: An inquiry into reducing rates of e-cigarette use in Queensland*

#### Queensland Government Response – 25 October 2023

#### Background

On 14 March 2023, the Legislative Assembly established an inquiry into reducing rates of e-cigarette use in Queensland (the Inquiry) which would be undertaken by the Queensland Parliament's Health and Environment Committee (the Committee).

The Terms of Reference for the Inquiry required the Committee to inquire into reducing rates of e-cigarette use in Queensland and report to the Legislative Assembly by 31 August 2023. on

In undertaking the inquiry, the committee was to consider:

1. The current status in Queensland relating to the:
  - a. prevalence of e-cigarette use, particularly amongst children and young people;
  - b. risks of vaping harmful chemicals, including nicotine, to individuals, communities, and the health system; and
  - c. approaches being taken in Queensland schools and other settings relevant to children and young people to discourage uptake and use of e-cigarettes.
2. Opportunities to increase:
  - a. awareness of the harmful effects of e-cigarette use (with and without nicotine) to an individual's health, and the effectiveness of preventative activities; and
  - b. accessibility and effectiveness of services and programs to prevent uptake and continuing use of e-cigarettes.
3. Consideration of waste management and environmental impacts of e-cigarette products.
4. A jurisdictional analysis of other e-cigarette use inquiries, legislative frameworks, policies and preventative activities (including their effectiveness in reducing e-cigarette use).

The Committee received 78 submissions to the Inquiry. On 31 August 2023, the Committee published Report No. 38, 57<sup>th</sup> Parliament, *Vaping: An inquiry into reducing rates of e-cigarette use in Queensland* (the Report), containing 14 recommendations.

#### Overview

The increasing uptake of e-cigarettes by young Queenslanders is a public health crisis. E-cigarettes have broadened the smoking product market and continue to rise in popularity, particularly among young people. The Committee found that e-cigarette use (vaping) has increased significantly in recent years, particularly among young adults, school-aged children, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and people experiencing mental illness.

Evidence regarding the potential harms of e-cigarettes continues to mount. E-cigarettes pose a significant risk for creating a new generation of Queenslanders for whom regular nicotine use is normal. While some people find e-cigarettes helpful to stop tobacco smoking, the uncertainty of the evidence for the efficacy of e-cigarettes for smoking cessation and the level of harms from e-cigarettes relative to tobacco products was noted by the Committee. The Committee also heard that e-cigarettes are already having a negative impact and presenting challenges for the community, schools and the health system.

As such the Queensland Government, in association with governments across Australia, has adopted a precautionary approach to e-cigarettes given the risks they pose to tobacco control and public health in terms of:

- a gateway to smoking initiation
- questions over effectiveness for cessation
- increasing youth uptake
- dual use with conventional tobacco products.

The Queensland Government agrees with the Committee that the window of opportunity to reduce e-cigarette use in Queensland is now and that a comprehensive, multi-strategy approach is needed. Such an approach must include regulation of e-cigarette supply with compliance monitoring and enforcement action, awareness raising public health campaigns, resources, guidelines and programs for schools, early intervention and cessation support programs to stop youth uptake and continued use of e-cigarettes, research to inform targeted preventive activities, and monitoring of e-cigarette use. Implementing these strategies will positively impact individuals, communities, the health and education systems and the Government.

Objections to stronger action on e-cigarettes by community members that use e-cigarettes for smoking cessation or recreational purposes are noted. E-cigarettes prescribed for smoking cessation or nicotine dependence will continue to be available to Queenslanders. The Australian Government has committed to making it easier to access e-cigarettes for therapeutic purposes.

The Queensland Government is already taking action on vaping, as acknowledged in the Committee's Report, including:

- \$1.3 million for a new youth-focused public health campaign about the harms of vaping
- \$3.9 million annually for Quitline to deliver nicotine dependence services to Queenslanders
- \$5 million to provide all schools with access to an online interactive program on vaping, alcohol and other drugs to support student wellbeing and engagement from Term 4, 2023
- a strengthened alcohol and drugs education program that is inclusive of vaping, made available to Queensland schools from early 2024
- implementing laws that prohibit the retail sale of smoking products including e-cigarettes to children, and prohibit the supply of nicotine e-cigarettes without a prescription by non-pharmacy retailers
- 153 authorised officers to respond to community complaints, monitor compliance and take enforcement action on Queensland's public health laws, including smoking and e-cigarette laws
- monitoring e-cigarette use among Queensland adults.

The Queensland Government supports all of the Committee's 14 recommendations. Responses to each of the recommendations are outlined in the table below.

As acknowledged by the Committee, 'current use' of e-cigarettes has not increased at the same rate as 'ever used' an e-cigarette, and there are gaps in the data for school-aged children and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Queensland Health funds and delivers ongoing monitoring of the rate of Queenslanders who are currently vaping, and those that have ever tried e-cigarettes. This is complemented by the Australian Government's national surveillance of e-cigarette use. The Queensland Government agrees that partnering with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations is critical for monitoring e-cigarette use and co-designing approaches to help reduce the harms of e-cigarette and tobacco use.

As noted by the Committee, lessons can be learnt from overseas and other governments' programs and campaigns intended to help young people stop vaping. The Queensland Government will consider the Committee's findings about public health campaigns, educational approaches and school-based settings in the delivery of existing investments and when planning new initiatives.

Recommendations about Queensland's smoking and vaping cessation services provide an opportunity to consider and build on the Government's existing investment in the Quitline service to enhance access and support for young people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Queenslanders wanting to quit vaping.

Four of the Committee's recommendations involve specific collaboration with the Australian Government. The Queensland Government is committed to continuing to work with the Australian and other State and Territory Governments to prevent the uptake and continued use of vaping among young people, while supporting people to access e-cigarettes prescribed for smoking cessation and nicotine addiction. The Australian Government has committed to strengthen product standards for all e-cigarettes. This is an opportunity to refer the matter of waste management of e-cigarettes to the Australian Government for further consideration.

As the Australian Government progresses its actions on vaping and tobacco control in collaboration with State and Territory Governments, the Queensland Government will continue to consider the most appropriate policy and regulatory approaches for Queenslanders.

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1	<p>The Committee recommends that the Queensland Government investigate establishing a joint task force involving Queensland and Commonwealth agencies with the primary objective of ending the illegal retail supply of e-cigarettes, including online, especially to people under the age of 18.</p>	<p><b>Supported.</b></p> <p><b>The cross-border supply of e-cigarettes requires collaborative enforcement action across all levels of government.</b></p> <p><b>The Queensland Government also notes there are existing inter-governmental governance frameworks, interagency cooperation and policy development in relation to enhanced e-cigarette control.</b></p> <p><b>The Queensland Government will write to the Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments about formalising coordinated enforcement approaches.</b></p> <p>The Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments have responsibilities under the <i>National Tobacco Strategy 2023-2030's</i> priority action area of stronger regulations for e-cigarettes. There are existing national governance mechanisms for all tobacco-related policy under the <i>National Tobacco Strategy 2023-2030</i>, including representative policy and enforcement forums of Commonwealth, State and Territory officials.</p> <p>The Queensland Government is working with Australian Government agencies to disrupt the illegal supply of e-cigarettes and tobacco products. Recent operations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operation Harvesthome: On 8 August 2023, Queensland Health and the Queensland Police Service worked with Australian Border Force (ABF), Australian Federal Police, Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA), Victoria Police and New South Wales Police Force (NSWPF) to execute warrants at 11 properties across South-East Queensland, Tweed Heads and Coffs Harbour regions. An estimated street value of \$5.3 million of suspected nicotine vaping products were seized by Queensland Health, TGA and NSWPF. Significant amounts of cash and illicit tobacco were also seized.</li> <li>• Operation Aberdeen: On 29 August 2023, more than 150 officers across the Crime and Corruption Commission, Queensland Police Service, Queensland Health, Australian Taxation Office, TGA and ABF executed warrants at 15 residential, retail and commercial locations in Logan, the Redlands and Ipswich. More than 60,000 e-cigarettes with an estimated street value of \$1.8 million were seized. Significant amounts of cash and illicit tobacco were also seized.</li> </ul> <p>The Queensland Government notes that these joint operations involve statewide deployment of officers and have significant resource implications for the Public Health Units in Hospital and Health Services and the Queensland Police Service.</p>

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		<p>Amendments to the <i>Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act 1998</i> (Qld) in June 2023, provided powers to disclose information to any other government entity or law enforcement agency for the purpose of regulating the supply of smoking products. Queensland Health will disclose information to other agencies in accordance with these powers to assist enforcement of restrictions on the supply of e-cigarettes.</p> <p>All Health Ministers are committed to enhancing regulation of e-cigarettes. In February 2023, Ministers agreed to establish a time-limited working group which was tasked to develop options to regulate or prohibit e-cigarettes.</p> <p>On 1 September 2023, Health Ministers agreed to extend the operation of the <i>Therapeutic Goods Act 1989</i> (Cth) to restrict the importation, manufacture and supply of all e-cigarettes. The Australian Government will lead the enforcement of new importation and manufacturing controls, advertising controls (including online) and controls on therapeutic e-cigarettes, while states and territories will lead the enforcement efforts at the point of wholesale and retail.</p> <p>The Health Ministers acknowledged that the involvement of police and law enforcement agencies would be critical and that a meeting of Health and Police Ministers should be scheduled as soon as practical.</p> <p>The Queensland Government notes that the Australian Government is progressing separate reforms to federal tobacco legislation, including capturing e-cigarettes in advertising and promotions restrictions. Restricting the advertising of e-cigarettes, including on social media, online commerce platforms and business websites is important to reduce the demand for and availability of e-cigarettes, particularly among youth.</p>
2	<p>The Committee recommends that the Queensland Government fund on-going research and data collection to obtain evidence of e-cigarette use in Queensland, to support the development of targeted preventive activities, programs, and support services.</p>	<p><b>Supported.</b></p> <p><b>The Queensland Government notes that there is existing state and national monitoring of e-cigarette use. The Queensland Government supports national monitoring of e-cigarette use, including both ‘ever trying’ and ‘current use’ and reporting at a State and Territory-level.</b></p> <p><b>Queensland Health will continue to monitor e-cigarette use in Queensland.</b></p> <p>Queensland Health has monitored rates of tobacco smoking since 2002 and e-cigarette use since 2015 in the adult Queensland Preventive Health Survey (QPHS). Each year, 12,500 adults participate in this general population survey. Results are reported in the Health of Queenslanders: Report of the Chief Health Officer Queensland. Information about parents’ knowledge and beliefs about e-cigarettes is collected periodically in the child QPHS. Approximately 2,500 parents participate in this survey annually.</p> <p>The National Drug Strategy Household Survey is conducted every three years. The Survey monitors e-cigarette use</p>

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		<p>including frequency, reasons for using, place of purchase, as well as degree of support for tobacco and e-cigarette control policies. The results for the 2022 survey are expected to be released by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare in early 2024.</p> <p>The Australian Secondary School Students Alcohol and Drug Survey is conducted every three years by Cancer Council Victoria. Up to 30,000 secondary school students aged 12 to 17 take part in the survey. The survey reports on e-cigarette use, where e-cigarettes were obtained, and knowledge/beliefs about e-cigarettes. The results for the 2022 survey are expected to be released by the Australian Department of Health and Aged Care in early 2024.</p> <p>Queensland Health periodically collates data on calls to the Queensland Poisons Information Centre about exposure to e-cigarettes and nicotine, presentations to hospital emergency departments relating to e-cigarettes, and hospital admissions linked to vaping-related disorders.</p> <p>Queensland Health supports time-limited, policy relevant, co-designed research and collaboration with leading academics and universities to support the development and review of prevention activities, programs and support services. Queensland Health is currently partnering with the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• University of Queensland to deliver a monitoring and evaluation framework for the <i>Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act 1998</i></li> <li>• University of Queensland and the CSIRO to develop a mapping tool and algorithm to track the location, growth and density of e-cigarette suppliers</li> <li>• University of Newcastle to identify effective, scalable interventions to prevent e-cigarette use in youth. This research received a national Medical Research Future Fund grant of \$1.9 million for 2023 to 2026</li> <li>• National E-cigarette Monitoring and Evidence Consortium, a collaboration of researchers and policy makers.</li> </ul>
3	<p>The committee recommends that the Queensland Government fund on-going research, undertaken in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, into e-cigarette use by Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.</p>	<p><b>Supported.</b></p> <p><b>Partnering with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations is critical for reducing the harms of e-cigarette and tobacco use.</b></p> <p><b>Queensland Health is committed to identifying opportunities to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, communities and organisations are involved in the design, delivery and evaluation of smoking reduction policies and programs.</b></p> <p>The Queensland Government notes the significant investment across agencies and providers in addressing health inequities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and the importance of building on existing investments. For insights into e-cigarette use this includes engaging with providers that have an established connection to communities on this issue such as</p>

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		<p>the Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council (QAIHC), State and national coordinators for the Tackling Indigenous Smoking program (TIS), community-controlled health services delivering TIS programs, and research consortiums.</p> <p>Liaison with providers investing in smoking reduction in Queensland will continue, or expand, including with QAIHC, as well as with TIS providers, coordinators, and researchers. Consideration will be given to identifying opportunities to work in partnership or fund research, where gaps are identified, to improve understanding of e-cigarette use and inform the development of appropriate strategies.</p> <p>The Queensland Government acknowledges investment by the Australian Government in the national TIS program. It is a key program engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities with population health approaches that prevent or reduce smoking product use. The program includes a coordinated evaluation undertaken in conjunction with research consortiums that assesses program delivery and measures the impact of the program on reducing tobacco and e-cigarette use.</p> <p>In May 2023 the Australian Government announced continued funding for the TIS program of \$141.2 million over 4 years and also widened the focus of the program to include strategies to reduce e-cigarette uptake and use in communities. The TIS program is delivered by providers across Queensland under the service leads which include The Institute of Urban Indigenous Health, Apunipima Cape York Health Council, and Torres Health Indigenous Corporation.</p> <p>The Queensland Government notes that the TIS program evaluation, alongside national data collection processes from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare and the Australian Bureau of Statistics provide valuable insight into e-cigarette use by Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.</p>
4	<p>The committee recommends that the Queensland Government cooperate with the Australian Government and all state and territory governments, in a national health campaign to inform the public of the facts about the potential risks of using e-cigarettes.</p>	<p><b>Supported.</b></p> <p><b>The Queensland Government is working with the Australian Government on e-cigarette health campaigns and notes recent investment in the development and execution of State-led campaigns by Queensland Health.</b></p> <p>The Queensland Government is working with the Australian Government and other States and Territories on the development of a national public health information campaign (Commonwealth funding of \$63.4 million over 4 years), with a strong focus on at-risk groups, including young people.</p> <p>The national campaign aims are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• drive and support tobacco and e-cigarette quit attempts</li> <li>• denormalise smoking and vaping</li> <li>• increase support in the community for quitting</li> </ul>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reduce the likelihood of people substituting smoking for vaping (and vice versa) instead of quitting.</li> </ul> <p>The Queensland Government supports the development of a national campaign that builds on recent State and Territory campaigns to prevent uptake of e-cigarettes by young adults and children and is informed by formative research conducted by States and Territories and campaign evaluation outcomes. Queensland Health is represented on the national campaign reference group which is overseeing campaign development.</p> <p>Recent Queensland Government campaign activity includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <i>There's Nothing Sweet about Vapes</i> public health campaign which launched on 24 August 2023. The \$1.3 million campaign targets young Queenslanders aged 12-17 years through social media, apps and websites. The campaign was informed by a comprehensive market research program that explored young person's perceptions, behaviours and attitudes towards vaping and the creative was co-designed with 50 young Queenslanders from regional, rural and urban areas.</li> <li>• A complementary website includes information for adolescents about the contents of e-cigarettes, potential risks of using e-cigarettes, and how to quit. Information for parents and carers about how to talk to their children about vaping and how to access services to support quitting is also available.</li> <li>• The <i>Vape Truths</i> public health campaign aimed at Queenslanders aged 18-34 years which was in market during June to August 2022 and March to June 2023. The campaign was informed by market research that explored attitudes, perceptions and behaviours related to vaping.</li> <li>• The <i>Vape Truths</i> campaign was also licensed for use by the South Australian Government.</li> <li>• The <i>Vape Truths</i> website provides information about the potential harms of vaping, content of e-cigarettes and the Queensland laws, as well as links to services to support quitting.</li> </ul> <p>A national campaign with consistent and complementary messaging is important to build public awareness on potential risks of using e-cigarettes. A youth focus is particularly important to prevent the continued growth in the use of these products by children and young adults. A call to action that encourages Australians to access services and apps, such as Quitline and My Quit Buddy, that offer support to quit the use of nicotine e-cigarettes is important.</p>
5	The committee recommends that the Department of Education assess the adequacy of the current vaping education resources for schools and supplement them where required to ensure that Queensland's schools have access to a	<p><b>Supported.</b></p> <p><b>The Queensland Government notes the Department of Education has reviewed drug and alcohol education resources and recently embarked on a program to update teacher and student resources with vaping information.</b></p>



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	<p>package of high-quality, evidence-informed, age-appropriate teaching resources, as well as access to professional training to assist in delivering the program effectively.</p>	<p>In collaboration with the University of Queensland's National Centre for Youth Substance Use Research, the Department of Education has conducted a review of its Alcohol and Other Drugs Education program, with 14 recommendations to be implemented in 2023-24. Implementing the recommendations will result in a strengthened program that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• teacher guidelines to specifically address vaping and e-cigarettes</li> <li>• resources for students about the impacts of alcohol and other drug use, including vaping and e-cigarettes</li> <li>• resources to help students make responsible, safe and informed health decisions.</li> </ul> <p>The updated program will be available to Queensland schools in early 2024 and will be supported by a professional development strategy.</p>
6	<p>The committee recommends that the Department of Education and Queensland Health prepare guidelines for all Queensland schools on interventions, such as interactive online courses, that can be used as an educative alternative for students found vaping or with vaping products, rather than pursuing punitive outcomes such as suspension.</p>	<p><b>Supported.</b></p> <p><b>The Queensland Government notes the Department of Education's investment in updating school resources for vaping and collaboration with Queensland Health through Youth Smoking and Vaping Interagency Advisory Group.</b></p> <p>The Department of Education has partnered with Griffith University to provide all Queensland secondary school students with access to Blurred Minds Academy, an online interactive program on vaping, alcohol and other drugs to support student wellbeing and engagement.</p> <p>The Blurred Minds Academy program includes 13 curriculum-mapped online modules to help secondary schools to address the underlying behaviours associated with drug use. There are specific modules about vaping. The program will be made available to all state, Catholic and independent schools via a staged roll-out, commencing in Term 4, 2023.</p> <p>The Department of Education is reviewing the Student Code of Conduct template and guidance materials. New guidance suggesting diversionary approaches as the first response to vaping behaviours will be incorporated.</p> <p>The Queensland Government notes other available products, such as the Lung Foundation's 'Unveil what you inhale: vaping truths' e-learning module. Lung Foundation Australia has developed the vaping eLearning module for young people aged 12-18 years old, aiming to support young people in making informed choices. The short interactive education module aims to bring awareness to the harms of vaping, fill critical knowledge gaps about vapes and encourages young people to be vape-free advocates amongst their friends and community.</p>
7	<p>The committee recommends that the Department of Education and Queensland Health prepare guidelines for all Queensland schools for identifying and</p>	<p><b>Supported.</b></p> <p><b>Queensland Health and the Department of Education will collaborate with School Based Youth Health Nurses and Queensland's Quitline service to co-design, pilot and</b></p>

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	<p>supporting students who are nicotine dependent, including the use of support services and referrals to help students to quit vaping</p>	<p><b>evaluate a nicotine dependency support program for Queensland school students aged 12 years and over. The program will be age and culturally appropriate, and disability-inclusive to ensure all students can have access to evidence-based cessation support that suits their needs. The program will be trialled, evaluated and refined in selected state secondary schools in 2024, ready for statewide roll out in 2025. The program will include guidelines and skills and knowledge development for School Based Youth Health Nurses and other school-based staff. Funding of \$1.39M over 3 years and then \$210,000 annually will support this program.</b></p> <p><b>The Queensland Government also notes a range of existing resources and planned work to identify and support students who are nicotine dependent.</b></p> <p>The Department of Education provides a range of specialist support staff, including guidance officers, psychologists and social workers and School Based Youth Health Nurses to provide direct support to students. These staff are well-placed to support students who school staff have identified may be nicotine dependent, including referring students to external support services.</p> <p>Dovetail, a drug and alcohol support service, provides clinical and harm minimisation advice and professional support to staff working with young people affected by alcohol and other drug use, including vaping. This includes fact sheets and videos about the harms of vaping and responses that can be taken by schools. Dovetail's 'Vape Check' is a new tool to help staff have a conversation with young people who are vaping.</p> <p>The Queensland Government recently received \$35.8 million in federal funding through the Australian Government's Student Wellbeing Boost program. The Student Wellbeing Boost provides for a one-off payment to every eligible school to support student mental health and wellbeing activities. Schools can utilise funding provided through the Student Wellbeing Boost to implement evidence-based student wellbeing, student engagement and mental health initiatives or programs, which could include programs or initiatives to address vaping.</p>
8	<p>The committee recommends that the Queensland Government support the implementation of measures, as proposed by the Australian Government, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• stop the importation of non-prescription e-cigarettes</li> <li>• increase the minimum quality standards for e-cigarettes including by restricting flavours, colours, and other ingredients</li> <li>• require pharmaceutical-like packaging</li> </ul>	<p><b>Supported.</b></p> <p><b>The Queensland Government continues to support coordinated national responses to the regulation of e-cigarettes for therapeutic purposes and reducing e-cigarette use for recreational purposes.</b></p> <p><b>The Queensland Government is committed to working with the Australian Government on e-cigarette regulation and will explore options to enforce Federal laws in retail and wholesale settings.</b></p> <p>Queensland was the first state to align e-cigarettes with smoking product laws, ensuring they could only be sold to adults, restricting where they can be used and prohibiting advertising and display in the retail setting. The sale and</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reduce allowed nicotine concentrations and volumes</li> <li>• ban all single use, disposable e-cigarettes</li> <li>• end the sale of e-cigarettes in retail settings, such as convenience stores and other retailers</li> <li>• make it easier to get a prescription for legitimate therapeutic use of e-cigarettes</li> </ul>	<p>purchase of nicotine-containing e-cigarettes has always required a prescription in Queensland.</p> <p>On 2 May 2023, the Federal Minister for Health and Aged Care announced an intention to ban the supply of all non-prescribed e-cigarette products.</p> <p>On 1 September 2023, Health Ministers agreed to extend the operation of the <i>Therapeutic Goods Act 1989</i> (Cth) to restrict the importation, manufacture and supply of all e-cigarettes. The Australian Government will lead the enforcement of new importation and manufacturing controls, advertising controls (including online) and controls on therapeutic e-cigarettes, while State and Territory Governments will lead the enforcement efforts at the point of wholesale and retail.</p> <p>Key priorities include building capacity to meet challenges posed by the increasing involvement of organised criminal groups that are resilient to public health enforcement efforts and the costs driven by complex investigations, transport, safe storage, and appropriate disposal of significant quantities of e-cigarettes.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will consider the interaction of the proposed amendments to the <i>Therapeutic Goods Act 1989</i> (Cth) and State-based laws for the regulation of smoking products, nicotine and therapeutic goods.</p> <p>Amendments to the <i>Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act 1998</i> (Qld), <i>Medicines and Poisons Act 2019</i> (Qld) and <i>Therapeutic Goods Act 2019</i> (Qld) may be required to support the implementation of the federal measures.</p>
9	<p>The committee recommends that Queensland Health assess the availability and capacity of services to support people to quit e-cigarettes and consider additional resourcing for these services, as required, so that vaping support is available in a variety of contexts and through a range of providers.</p>	<p><b>Supported.</b></p> <p><b>The Queensland Government notes the existing arrangements in place to support people who are concerned about their nicotine dependency.</b></p> <p><b>The Queensland Government also notes the Australian Government’s 2023-2024 budget commitment to expand and scale up Quitline, cessation support apps and clinical guidance to include vaping support. In the context of this investment, Queensland Health will conduct a gap analysis and develop options for nicotine dependence services, focussed on priority populations, informed by consumer consultation.</b></p> <p>The Queensland Quitline service supports all Queenslanders to quit vaping and/or tobacco smoking through single session assessment and quit planning. Individuals can choose to engage with the service as they require, calling as many times as they need. Current funding supports 10,000 calls to Quitline each year.</p> <p>In addition, the Queensland Quitline service supports priority population groups through the Intensive Quit Support Program to quit vaping and/or tobacco smoking. This program is unique</p>

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		<p>to Queensland and includes four scheduled counselling/ support contacts and a free 12-week supply of mono or combination nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) sent directly to the individual's residence. Current funding supports 4400 participants each year from these priority groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders</li> <li>• pregnant women and their partners</li> <li>• a person who is planning a pregnancy within the next 6 month</li> <li>• parents, carers and guardians of children aged under three</li> <li>• residents of Hospital and Health Services with an adult daily smoking rate greater than 11%</li> <li>• Queensland Health and Queensland Ambulance staff</li> <li>• other priority groups (e.g. clients of Community Mental Health/Alcohol and Other Drugs Services)</li> </ul> <p>Queensland Hospital and Health Services use the Smoking Cessation Clinical Pathway (SCCP) to identify clients who are vaping and/or smoking tobacco. The SCCP is used during all admissions and allows the treating health professional to provide information and NRT to support nicotine withdrawal and cravings for inpatients. Patients are advised on the benefits of quitting vaping and/or tobacco smoking, and how the Queensland Quitline service can assist them to quit. With the patient's consent, the health professional can use the SCCP to refer the client to Quitline for ongoing cessation support.</p> <p>Queensland Health has developed an evidence-based, best practice smoking/vaping cessation clinician training program. The program is delivered on-line by content experts. Topics cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• supporting cessation</li> <li>• nicotine dependence and pharmacotherapy</li> <li>• Smoking Cessation Clinical Pathway</li> <li>• nicotine vaping products</li> <li>• cessation support services</li> <li>• priority cohorts: pregnancy and early life; First Nations people; mental health clients; adolescents and young people.</li> </ul> <p>The program provides professional development for health professionals, equipping them with fundamental skills for integrating smoking cessation advice into their clinical practice.</p> <p>Queensland Health has developed a series of free online training sessions to assist all health professionals conduct vaping and/or smoking brief interventions with their clients. This training is available to clinicians internal and external to Queensland Health.</p> <p>Queensland Health maintains Quit HQ, a website dedicated to supporting Queenslanders to quit vaping and/or tobacco smoking. The website is regularly updated and provides a range of tools to assist cessation.</p> <p>The Queensland Government notes the Medicare Benefits Schedule includes items for patients to access nicotine and</p>

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		<p>smoking cessation counselling, care and advice by general practitioners.</p> <p>The Queensland Government notes the Australian Government announced in the 2023-23 Budget:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• establishing an online quitting support hub</li> <li>• redeveloping and modernising the My Quit Buddy app to include vaping</li> <li>• scaling up state and territory Quitline and other quit services to meet increased demand</li> <li>• updating clinical guidance to support the health workforce.</li> </ul> <p>As noted in the response to recommendation 4, in the 2023-24 Budget, the Australian Government also announced funding for a new public health information campaign to discourage Australians from taking up smoking and vaping and encourage more people to quit. Queensland will collaborate with the Australian Government to ensure promotion of Quitline for cessation of vaping and/or tobacco smoking.</p>
10	<p>The committee recommends that Queensland Health collaborate with health departments in other Australian jurisdictions and Quit Victoria to facilitate the development of a specialised service to provide tailored support to young people who want to stop vaping.</p>	<p><b>Supported.</b></p> <p><b>The Queensland Government notes recent and planned work to identify and support young people who are concerned about their nicotine use.</b></p> <p>Queensland Health’s Quitline service engages with Quitline services nationally in the development of service delivery protocols. Protocols regarding quitting vaping and use of nicotine vaping products have recently been developed. Quit Victoria also set National Minimum Standards for Australian Quitline’s to ensure a minimum standard of consistency across services.</p> <p>Queensland Health will continue to collaborate with other jurisdictions and organisations to identify evidence-based, best practice approaches to assist the development of the vaping and/or smoking cessation support program for adolescents.</p> <p>As noted in the response to recommendation 7, in Queensland, School Based Youth Health Nurses, Quitline, Department of Education and Queensland Health will co-design an age-appropriate program to support school students aged 12 years or over to quit vaping and/or tobacco smoking. Learnings and outcomes of this program will be shared to inform national work.</p>
11	<p>The committee recommends that the Queensland Government consider extending the capacity of the Quitline service in Queensland, including to provide for engagement of additional counsellors with youth experience.</p>	<p><b>Supported.</b></p> <p><b>The Queensland Quitline service will provide evidence-based, training to increase the engagement skills of telephone counsellors to appropriately and professionally support young people to quit vaping and/or tobacco smoking.</b></p>

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		<p><b>The Queensland Government notes the existing services Quitline provides to young people who are concerned about their nicotine dependency.</b></p> <p><b>As part of a gap analysis about nicotine dependency services (see response to recommendation 9) Queensland Health will consider the capacity of Quitline to meet the needs of young Queenslanders that are concerned about their nicotine dependency.</b></p> <p>As noted in the response to recommendation 9, the Queensland Quitline service supports all Queenslanders to quit vaping and/or tobacco smoking through single session assessment and quit planning. Current funding supports 10,000 calls to Quitline each year.</p> <p>In addition, the Queensland Quitline service supports priority population groups through the Intensive Quit Support Program to quit vaping and tobacco smoking. This program is unique to Queensland and includes four scheduled counselling/support contacts and a free 12-week supply of mono or combination nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) sent directly to the individuals residence. Current funding supports 4400 participants annually from priority groups. <b>As noted in recommendation 12, Queensland Health will support an immediate uplift in this service to support more Queenslanders.</b></p>
12	<p>The committee recommends that the Queensland Government consider a program to supply Nicotine Replacement Therapy at reduced cost to people who want to quit tobacco products or e-cigarettes.</p>	<p><b>Supported.</b></p> <p><b>The Queensland Government will extend the capacity of Queensland’s Quitline to provide cessation support/counselling plus 12 weeks of free Nicotine Replacement Therapy for up to an additional 1500 Queenslanders a year. Funding of \$1M annually will support this expansion.</b></p> <p><b>The Queensland Government notes existing programs for reduced or no cost NRT products through Quitline and pharmacies.</b></p> <p>Nicotine replacement patches are currently available at reduced cost through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. A prescription from a General Practitioner is required for access with significantly reduced costs for concession card holders.</p> <p>Through the Intensive Quit Support Program, Queensland’s Quitline service provides a free 12-week supply of NRT (patches, gum, lozenges, mouth spray) in conjunction with tailored counselling sessions, to eligible clients to support vaping and/or smoking cessation. Current funding provides for 4,400 Queenslanders to access this service each year.</p> <p>Quitline also provides all callers with advice about the use of NRT consistent with clinical recommendations and precautions of Queensland Health, the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, and the Australian Government.</p>

No.	Report Recommendation	Government Response
		<p>Queensland Hospital and Health Services currently provide no-cost NRT to inpatients to manage withdrawal and craving symptoms from nicotine whilst in hospital.</p>
13	<p>The committee recommends that the Queensland Government assess workforce requirements and assign necessary resources to support compliance monitoring and enforcement activities relating to e-cigarettes under the <i>Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act 1998</i> and the <i>Medicines and Poisons Act 2019</i>.</p>	<p><b>Supported.</b></p> <p><b>The Queensland Government notes reported on-going non-compliance with e-cigarette laws at State and Federal levels and will provide an immediate uplift in resources for enforcement of the <i>Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act 1998</i> and the <i>Medicines and Poisons Act 2019</i> by authorised officers in Public Health Units. Funding of \$5M per annum has been allocated for this initiative.</b></p> <p><b>The Queensland Government notes proposals for further national reform to reduce illegal supply (see Report recommendation 1).</b></p> <p><b>Queensland Health will work with other agencies to assess the resources, skills and intelligence arrangements needed to detect, disrupt and deter illegal e-cigarette supply under future national laws.</b></p> <p><b>This work will align with recommendation 1, as part of working with the Australian Government, State and Territory Governments about formalising coordinated enforcement approaches under proposed reforms to e-cigarette control laws.</b></p> <p>Queensland Health has 153 environmental health officers in Public Health Units in Hospital and Health Services across Queensland who are authorised to monitor compliance and enforce the <i>Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act 1998</i> and/or the <i>Medicines and Poisons Act 2019</i>. Officers are also responsible for monitoring and enforcing compliance with other significant public health legislation, such as the <i>Food Act 2006</i>, <i>Public Health Act 2005</i>, <i>Water Fluoridation Act 2008</i> and the <i>Radiation Safety Act 1999</i>.</p> <p>Queensland Police Service officers provide support to Queensland Health in operations where there is suspected involvement of organised crime. Queensland Police Service officers may also be authorised under the <i>Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act 1998</i>, at the discretion of the Police Commissioner.</p> <p>In 2022-23, there was a significant amount of compliance activity under the <i>Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act 1998</i> with 569 complaints recorded by Public Health Units, 453 inspections and 128 investigations undertaken by Public Health Units, and 404 enforcement actions including written warnings, improvement notices, on-the-spot fines and legal proceedings. This activity captures supply of smoking products and smoking in smoke-free places.</p> <p>Compliance activity under the <i>Medicines and Poisons Act 2019</i> in 2022-23, included 107 recorded complaints, 618 inspections and 261 investigations undertaken by Public Health Units, and 120 enforcement actions. This activity captures a broad range</p>

No.	Report Recommendation	Government Response
		<p>of offences across the supply, possession and use of medicines, poisons, and pest control substances. It is not specific to the supply of nicotine-containing e-cigarettes.</p> <p>Queensland Health provides an online complaint form and a telephone service for the community to make complaints about the supply of smoking products (including e-cigarettes), including retail sales to children. This intelligence helps target enforcement efforts where they are needed. The Queensland Government notes that continued complaints of non-compliance with e-cigarette regulation will have resource implications for Public Health Units, and for Queensland Police Service where there is suspected involvement of organised crime.</p> <p>Queensland Health will continue to support its authorised officers through the provision of training, compliance tools, guidance information, advice, and compliance reporting systems. A new centralised intelligence support function is being established to help identify where compliance and enforcement action is most needed. Queensland Health is also exploring options to enhance authorised officers' compliance and enforcement actions relating to sale of smoking products to children.</p>
14	<p>The committee recommends that the Queensland Government investigate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the feasibility of introducing a return and recycling scheme for vaping products</li> <li>• the introduction of product design requirements that would facilitate recycling and/or safe disposal of e-cigarettes and their batteries.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Supported.</b></p> <p><b>The Queensland Government notes the environmental impact of electronic cigarettes.</b></p> <p><b>The Queensland Government also notes the Australian Government's plans to ban disposable and single use vapes and introduce stricter product standards for all e-cigarettes. Accordingly, the Queensland Government considers it appropriate to refer these matters to the Australian Government, for consideration.</b></p> <p>The <i>Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011</i> (Qld) contains provisions that allow for the development of voluntary, co-regulatory or mandatory product stewardship schemes in Queensland.</p> <p>The investigation of any scheme would be undertaken in consultation with impacted stakeholders to determine the most appropriate framework. Ideally schemes that involve national suppliers should be national schemes and the opportunity exists for initial investigation into the potential for a national approach.</p> <p>The Queensland Government will explore the option of working with stakeholders to design a framework for a possible national scheme. Such a framework could include the application of a single-use plastic item ban and a product stewardship arrangement for reusable vapes.</p> <p>Queensland Health will explore options for safe disposal of e-cigarettes that are seized by Queensland Health during compliance and enforcement action.</p>



**Queensland Legislative Assembly**

Number: 5723T 17 38



**25 OCT 2023**

Tabled

By Leave

MP: Hon. Lentyn

Clerk's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, written over the Clerk's Signature line and extending upwards into the MP field.