



弘醫道 育專才 建未來  
MEDICAL EXCELLENCE FOR A HEALTHY FUTURE

**COUNCIL**

*President*  
Prof. C.S. Lau  
*Vice-Presidents*  
Dr. C.C. Lau  
Prof. Gilberto Leung  
*Honorary Secretary*  
Prof. Henry Chan  
*Honorary Treasurer*  
Dr. Y.F. Chow  
*Editor*  
Prof. Martin Wong

1 April 2019

The Hon KWOK Wai-keung, JP  
Chairman

Bills Committee on Smoking (Public Health) (Amendment) Bill 2019  
Legislative Council Complex  
1 Legislative Council Road  
Central, Hong Kong

**EX OFFICIO MEMBERS**

*Presidents of the Academy Colleges of*  
*Anaesthesiologists*  
Prof. C.W. Cheung  
*Community Medicine*  
Dr. Thomas Tsang  
*Dental Surgeons*  
Dr. Edmond Pow  
*Emergency Medicine*  
Dr. Axel Siu  
*Family Physicians*  
Dr. David Chao  
*Obstetricians and Gynaecologists*  
Prof. T.Y. Leung  
*Ophthalmologists*  
Prof. Jimmy Lai  
*Orthopaedic Surgeons*  
Dr. W.P. Yau  
*Otorhinolaryngologists*  
Dr. Victor Abdullah  
*Paediatricians*  
Dr. Winnie Tse  
*Pathologists*  
Dr. Michael Chan  
*Physicians*  
Prof. Philip Li  
*Psychiatrists*  
Dr. Roger Ng  
*Radiologists*  
Dr. C.K. Law  
*Surgeons*  
Prof. Paul Lai

Dear Mr. Kwok,

**Views on Smoking (Public Health) (Amendment) Bill 2019**

The Hong Kong Academy of Medicine and its 15 constituent Colleges fully support the Government's proposal pledged in the Chief Executive's 2018 Policy Address to impose a total ban on electronic cigarettes and other new smoking products. With one of its missions being to protect public health, the Academy would like to reiterate the importance and urgency to pass and implement the Amendment Bill to prohibit these products.

We would like to emphasise that a complete ban instead of regulation on these products must be enacted. Recently, we have noticed a campaign seeking for support to regulate heat-not-burn tobacco products. The Academy has cautioned members of the public to beware of misleading or deceitful claims and campaigns which the true intention is to promote new tobacco products. People's action to sign the petition may be twisted as a sign of approval for the import, distribution and sale of heat-not-burn cigarettes in Hong Kong. While it is only optional for signatories to provide their name and contact details, signatures collected through this misleading campaign by no means provide convincing evidence showing that the public supports to regulate the products. On the contrary, for an online signatory campaign initiated by Hong Kong Council on Smoking and Health (COSH), as of March 2019, over 30,000 citizens and companies/ organisations have shown support to enact a total ban on electronic cigarettes and other new tobacco products, not to mention the various online and offline campaigns coordinated by other organisations in the community.

The Academy has repeatedly put forward strong arguments in favour of a total ban over mere regulation of new tobacco products. During the past year, we have joined other organisations in the medical profession as well as COSH on

**ELECTED COUNCIL MEMBERS**

Dr. P.P. Chen  
Prof. Gabriel Leung  
Dr. H.T. Luk  
Dr. W.L. Tang  
Dr. Clara Wu

**Honorary Legal Advisor**  
Mr. Jacob Tse

**Auditor**  
Crowe (HK) CPA Limited

**Chief Executive Officer**  
Mr. Aaron Cheng

this policy advocacy. We also expressed our grave concerns to the Chief Executive over the false claims and untrue information portraying electronic cigarettes and heat-not-burn products as new technologies for the benefit of public health, which dangerously downplayed the negative impacts and health risks of these products. We should not underestimate the adverse impacts of this emerging epidemic of addiction which is penetrating the younger generation.

There is undoubtedly an imperative need for a total ban on these products. To illustrate, first, there is growing evidence of higher health risks, such as cardiovascular and pulmonary effects and cancer, for using these products which contain harmful substances, chemicals and nicotine. Second, studies showed that people who use electronic cigarettes would be likely to become future smokers of conventional cigarettes. Therefore, they serve as a gateway for youngsters to pick up cigarette smoking. Third, electronic cigarettes and heat-not-burn products, like conventional cigarettes, contain nicotine that could lead to addiction, so they are an ineffective approach to quit smoking. Finally, it is noteworthy that more countries are joining to prohibit electronic cigarettes and other new tobacco products.

The Academy and its 15 constituent Colleges applaud the Government's continuous tobacco control efforts in safeguarding public health. With lessons learnt from overseas experience, regulation of electronic cigarettes and other new tobacco products is found ineffective and therefore a policy of total ban is the only way to stop the epidemic from spreading and reaching an uncontrollable state. We strongly support the Amendment Bill to ban the import, manufacture, sale, distribution and advertisement of these alternative smoking products.

Yours sincerely,



Professor LAU Chak-sing  
President  
Hong Kong Academy of Medicine