



THE FEDERATION OF MEDICAL SOCIETIES OF HONG KONG

香 港 醫 學 組 織 聯 會

2017-2019

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林鄭月娥

4 April, 2019

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Dr. Mario Wai-kwong CHAK
翟偉光

Bills Committee on Smoking (Public Health) (Amendment) Bill 2019
Legislative Council

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黃慶生

Re: LegCo Deputation Meeting on the Ban of Alternative Smoking Products

The Federation of Medical Societies of Hong Kong comprises 141 member societies whose collective mission is to promote a healthier society. We therefore strongly support the legislation to ban, and not just to regulate, electronic cigarettes and other new tobacco products, including heat-not-burn tobacco and vaping.

All forms of tobacco, including e-cigarettes have no health benefits. Indeed, they are harmful and addictive. When addicted, there is no freedom of choice. E-cigarettes and the other new tobacco products are clearly aimed at non-smokers and young people. The aim is to get more youngsters addicted to nicotine.

There is no conclusive evidence that e-cigarettes help smokers to quit. Until there is evidence, such health claims cannot be made, just as one cannot make therapeutic claims for a new drug without clinical trials. Even so, such products will be restricted to smokers, just as methadone can only be used in drug addicts.

Selling addictive substances is hugely profitable. E-cigarettes and the other new tobacco products are the 'modern opium'. We must keep them out of Hong Kong, not just for ourselves but for future generations.

If cigarettes were only invented yesterday, we would be pressing for a total ban too. Unfortunately, there are already many smokers who are addicted and cannot give up smoking. We must not make the same mistake again.

The U.S. has never seen use of any substance by its young people rise as rapidly as e-cigarette use is rising. The U.S. Surgeon General issued an

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advisory on 18th December 2018 stressing the importance of protecting children from a lifetime of nicotine addiction and associated health risks by immediately addressing the epidemic of youth e-cigarette use.

Say No to E-cigarettes is our motto. We should not punish the users of new tobacco, because they are the victims of addiction. For those that smuggle, manufacture, distribute, sell and promote the new tobacco, we believe that there is no alternative but to use the full weight of the law to deter such activities and to bring the transgressors to justice.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Mario Wai-kwong CHAK
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