



香港社會醫學學院
HONG KONG COLLEGE OF COMMUNITY MEDICINE
founder College of the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine
Incorporated with limited liability



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COUNCIL 2019-20

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Clerk to Bills Committee on Smoking (Public Health) (Amendment) Bill 2019
Legislative Council Secretariat
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road, Central, HK
Email: bc_54_18@legco.gov.hk

8 April, 2019

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

Dear Sir,

The Hong Kong College of Community Medicine (HKCCM) strongly supports a total ban on electronic cigarettes, heat-not-burn (HNB) tobacco and other new tobacco products in Hong Kong.

All along, the local medical profession, including HKCCM, has been unequivocal and clear in advocating a total ban on such products due to their deleterious health impact to the community. The tobacco industry, on the other hand, is exerting its influence to counterbalance this by pushing for a regulatory regime legitimizing the use of these products in order to preserve and expand its market.

The health risks of e-cigarettes, HNB and other new tobacco products are being increasingly recognized. Studies have found they contain numerous harmful chemicals including certain carcinogens. Moreover, the notion that e-cigarettes and other new tobacco products help smokers quit is grossly misleading. Like conventional cigarettes, these products are addictive and many e-cigarette users pick up a dual habit smoking concurrently traditional cigarettes and e-cigarettes. False claims about e-cigarettes helping people quit also detract smokers from proven effective measures such as smoking cessation programs or nicotine replacement therapy.

The most compelling reason for a total ban is to keep our young people safe and block the gateway that induces them to become smokers. Young people are especially susceptible to the glamorous and trendy marketing practices of e-cigarettes (like candy flavored e-cigarettes), HNB and other new tobacco products targeted at them. The United States of America is witnessing an epidemic of teen vaping, so alarming that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) declared in a statement in February 2019 that “the epidemic use of e-cigarettes among children is one of the biggest public health challenges currently facing the FDA”.



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In Hong Kong, we must take strong and pre-emptive measures to prevent the rise in teen vaping, which can soar many fold and reach double-digit percentage based on overseas experience. The message is loud and clear. A total ban on e-cigarettes and other new tobacco products is necessary; mere regulation is weak and insufficient.

We urge the Bills Committee to pass the Smoking (Public Health) (Amendment) Bill 2019. The health of our community at large, especially that of our next generation, depends on it.

Yours sincerely,

Dr TSANG Ho-fai Thomas
President
Hong Kong College of Community Medicine