



- CONSUMER CHOICE
- RATIONAL DEBATE
- SENSIBLE REGULATION

**Submission to the Legislative Council Panel on Health Services on:
“Hong Kong Cancer Strategy”**

**HK GOVT SHOULD ADOPT “HARM REDUCTION” APPROACH
TO REDUCE TOBACCO-RELATED HARM**

Hong Kong, 1 November 2019 – Factasia, a consumer rights NGO called upon the Hong Kong Govt to include “Harm Reduction” in the strategy to fight cancer.

Factasia welcomed the publication of the “Hong Kong Cancer Strategy” report by the Govt. The report will be tabled and discussed at the Legco Health Services Panel on 8 November 2019. Factasia urged legislators and the Govt to consider formally permitting reduced harm tobacco products to be sold in Hong Kong. This will allow current smokers who cannot (or choose not to) quit smoking to use products that are 90% less harmful than conventional cigarettes.

This is what international health experts refer to as “Harm Reduction” approach in tobacco control and has been widely adopted internationally including the US, the UK, the EU, Australia, Japan etc.

The Govt Cancer Strategy report rightly pointed out the importance of Govt/community and private sector joint efforts and collaboration to tackle Hong Kong’s number one fatal disease. The Strategy includes Govt funding of cancer-related research. Factasia strongly urged the Govt to fund a largescale tracking study on local smokers who have switched to reduced harm tobacco products (and as control to also include those who do not switch) to evaluate the impact of the change.

The US Food & Drug Administration (FDA) announced in April this year its decision to approve the sale of reduced harm (i.e. heat-not-burn) tobacco products nation-wide. This followed an in-depth, two-year review and the FDA determined that authorizing these products for the sale in the US was “appropriate for the protection of public health” because the products produce “fewer or lower levels of some toxins than combustible cigarettes.”¹

About factasia.org:

factasia.org is an independent consumer advocacy and consultancy based in Hong Kong and operating throughout Asia-Pacific, bringing reasoned debate to difficult or controversial issues to achieve optimal, equitable outcomes for all parties. Factasia advocates rational debate about – and sensible regulation of – the rights of adult citizens to choose to use tobacco or other nicotine related products. factasia does not promote smoking or the use of nicotine, opposes all under-age use of cigarettes or any other product containing nicotine, and does not engage in any manufacturing or distribution activities.

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¹ <https://ru.reuters.com/article/idUSKCN1S629A>