

AMA Queensland Submission**Health and Environment Committee Inquiry****'Vaping – An inquiry into reducing rates of e-cigarette use in Queensland'**

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AMA Queensland thanks the Health and Environment Committee for inviting public submissions on its inquiry into reducing rates of e-cigarette use in Queensland (the Vaping Inquiry).

Vaping remains of significant concern to medical practitioners and their patients and AMA Queensland has continually advocated for reforms, particularly laws to protect children and young people, from the harms of e-cigarettes and other smoking products. In fact, multiple health organisations and other bodies remain alarmed at the proliferation of these products and rising use, particularly amongst people aged under 18 years, despite clear evidence of the detrimental health impacts.

In that context, it is perplexing that the Queensland Legislative Assembly agreed to a motion for an inquiry when what was needed was urgent legislative reform to control the sale and availability of vaping products. AMA Queensland again urges the government to act swiftly and that the Health and Environment Committee likewise recommend that appropriate laws are introduced without further delay.

Given the extensive materials published with regard to the harms of e-cigarettes and similar smoking products, it is unnecessary to reproduce that evidence in this submission. AMA Queensland reiterates that the prescription of vaping and other smoking products should be a last resort smoking cessation tool, prescribed only by a patient's regular doctor who has a strong understanding of their patient's health and history. Indeed, many AMA Queensland members advise they do not prescribe vapes given the limited evidence to support their safety and effectiveness and ready-availability of clinically-proven and safe alternatives.

As such, we urge the Committee to make the following recommendations to the Queensland Government:

- That it work closely with the Federal Government to complement its proposed reforms, announced on 2 May 2023, that all vaping products (including those claimed as 'nicotine-free') will be prescription-only, by:

- introducing requisite penalties for the supply and sale of vaping products in Queensland by persons and businesses not authorised under the Federal regulations;
 - amending relevant legislation to prohibit the advertising of vaping and other smoking products, particularly where targeted at people under 18 years of age; and
 - funding Queensland-specific education campaigns to reduce the appeal of such products amongst key groups, especially children and young people and vulnerable, regional, rural and remote communities.
- That it continue to advocate for the Federal Government to:
 - Limit authorised prescribers for e-cigarettes and related products to a patient's usual general practitioner who has a strong understanding of their patient's health and history. AMA Queensland strongly advocates that the prescribing and dispensing of vaping products be strictly separated given the powerful vested interests involved in the manufacture and sale of these products. We highlight the very recent attempts by big tobacco companies to compromise pharmacists' integrity by offering pharmacies incentive payments to stock their vaping products. This must be prevented.
 - Amend MBS telehealth smoking cessation items so only a patient's usual doctor can prescribe vaping products.
 - That it add vaping products to Queensland Health's *Monitored Medicines Standard* and other relevant legislation to ensure the checking of QScript to reduce the risk of prescriber-shopping for these products.

In addition to the above recommendations, AMA Queensland also submits the following documents (attached) which must be read as part of this submission:

- Joint submission to the Vaping Inquiry, signed by the Lung Foundation Australia, AMA Queensland, National Heart Foundation, Cancer Council Queensland and other health organisations.
- The [Australian Medical Association's submission to the Therapeutic Goods Administration – Potential reforms to the regulation of nicotine vaping products](#).