

MEDIA RELEASE

1 November 2023

The AMA welcomes Bill to tighten tobacco and vaping laws

The Australian Medical Association will tell a senate inquiry today, that reforms to the Public Health (Tobacco and Other Products) Legislation are an improvement but there is still more work to do to prevent harm from tobacco and vaping products.

AMA (NSW) President Dr Michael Bonning will tell the inquiry he has witnessed firsthand the harms tobacco products and vapes cause to patients and the new laws are a good start to discourage people from smoking and vaping.

“The AMA supports the changes to the legislation, as they include evidence-based measures to revitalise Australia’s tobacco and vaping control measures to protect Australians from harm,” Dr Bonning said.

“These include new measures around rotating health warnings, standardising packaging and terms that can be used.

“Australia has made so much progress in tobacco control over the past few decades, but tobacco use remains the leading cause of preventable death and disability. More needs to be done to crack down on tobacco sponsorship and implement the retail ban on vapes.

“The AMA supports changes that will bring e-cigarettes in line with tobacco advertising restrictions. The AMA also supports the Bill’s restrictions on social media marketing that targets individuals based on algorithms.”

Dr Bonning, who chairs the AMA’s Public Health Committee, will tell the inquiry, that the AMA does not support political parties accepting sponsorship from tobacco or e-cigarette companies and calls on all parties to refuse to enter arrangements that clearly compromise government policy making on public health matters.

“The AMA calls for all political parties to stop accepting sponsorship from the tobacco industry because this clearly compromises government policy making on public health matters.”

“Proposed vaping reforms are critical — including a retail ban on all vapes — and are an overdue change to protect younger people from becoming addicted to nicotine.

“Australia needs to protect younger people from addiction to vaping and not make the same mistakes it made around tobacco use in the past. It took decades for the health harms of tobacco to come to light, with the powerful tobacco industry disputing the evidence and relentlessly promoting their addictive products.

“We are seeing the same tactics play out today with vapes, hooking new generations on to nicotine by marketing directly to younger people and downplaying the health harms.”

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