



**E-cigarette
Research**

Dr. Farsalinos' Scientific Blog

IN FAVOUR OF FLAVOUR

We are at a critical juncture in the global effort to reduce the 8 million annual smoking-related deaths.

A policy of tobacco harm reduction (THR) is helping adult smokers who can't quit by enabling them to switch to significantly less risky products, thereby preventing disease and saving lives.

Now many governments are in the process of examining (or re-examining) the role of these reduced-risk nicotine-based products, and their use of flavourings.

In his ground-breaking new report, **Dr Konstantinos Farsalinos** has examined the science, consumer insights, risks and regulatory considerations pertaining to flavours used in tobacco harm reduction, specifically in nicotine vaping products, otherwise called electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) or e-cigarettes.

His review concludes that restrictions on vaping flavours would risk seriously reducing the life-saving potential of these innovative products.



**DR FARSALINOS, A CARDIOLOGIST
WITH A CAREER DEVOTED TO TOBACCO
HARM REDUCTION, SAYS:**

Well-regulated use of flavours can and should be considered as a valuable tool to help prevent disease and save the lives of adult smokers who cannot or will not quit by themselves or with other approved methods.

If bans were allowed, it would ultimately drive consumers to tampering, illicitly traded products, towards the black market, or back to traditional cigarettes.

KEY EVIDENCE



Public Health England and the Royal College of Physicians say the hazard to health arising from vaping is unlikely to **exceed 5%** of the harm from smoking tobacco.



Prof. David Levy, a veteran tobacco control researcher from the USA, calculated that if all adult smokers in the USA were to switch to nicotine vaping products, a staggering 1.8 million deaths would be avoided and **38.9 million life years saved**.



Flavourings are used in **Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT)** products, such as lozenges and gums, which are on the World Health Organization (WHO) list of essential medicines.



A US study found that adults vaping other flavours were **more than TWICE as successful at quitting smoking** than adults who vaped tobacco flavours. Another study found that adults who quit smoking by vaping other flavours were **almost THREE times more successful at staying off cigarettes** for one year or more than adults who vaped tobacco flavours.

CONSUMERS' VOICES

The review includes the testimonies of thousands of consumers who, like **Dr Farsalinos**, have used e-cigarettes to quit smoking, but are effectively the 'orphans' of the tobacco control debate whose voice should be heard.

Together with public health influencers and advocates, they give compelling evidence of how **vape flavourings have helped to save their lives** and why, without them, they are more likely to return to cigarettes.



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CONCLUSIONS

Flavours used in ENDS are inextricably linked to smoking cessation

It is clear that flavoured nicotine vaping products are instrumental in aiding adult smokers in their quest to quit smoking cigarettes.

Bans of ENDS / flavours will harm, not help individual and population health

Flavour bans equate to a form of prohibition, which is a net negative for society, both in terms of criminal activity and consumer safety. Moreover, the greatest risk is for bans to redirect vapers back to smoking deadly combustible cigarettes.

Blocking youth initiation of smoking (and vaping) is a priority

While youth access to vaping products is a serious problem, and one that needs to be addressed, it would be misguided to ban vaping flavours to attempt to accomplish the goal of eliminating youth use. It would be best if legislators focused more narrowly on youth access at the point of sale and to eliminate flavour descriptors clearly targeting the youth.

Health professionals should provide accurate and evidence-based information

For the practising physician today, the evidence is clear – build THR into your practice without delay!



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RECOMMENDATIONS



Increased accessibility, affordability and consumer acceptance of smoking cessation tools, such as flavoured vapes, through proportionate, risk-based regulation and robust monitoring.



Consumer studies to assess effectiveness of flavours and enhance the quitting journey.



Research to ensure the safety of flavours to maximise harm reduction.



Monitoring of health professional perceptions of THR products.



Upgrades to training of health professionals in THR science, policy and products, including the role of flavours (as is used in NRT).



Marketing codes / guidelines and enforcement of highest possible standards to restrict marketing to the under-aged.



Risk-proportionate, balanced regulations of tobacco harm reduction products, including the use of flavours.



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