

Health Canada and The Ecig Flavourium/Vapor Advocates of Ontario meeting: Vaping– August 26, 2019

Subject:

Meeting to discuss youth vaping, survey data and educating adult smokers [vaping]

Date:

August 26, 2019

Participants:

Health Canada (HC)

- James Van Loon
 - Director General, Tobacco Control Directorate (TCD) (Chair)
- Mathew Cook
 - Acting Director, Tobacco Products Regulatory Office, TCD
- Dana Beaton
 - Acting Director, Office of Policy and Strategic Planning, TCD
- David Mills
 - Acting Director, Office of Research and Surveillance, TCD

- Senior Advisor, Director General's Office, TCD
- Senior Policy Analyst, Stakeholder Relations and International Policy, TCD

The E cig Flavourium

- Maria Papaioannoy
 - Owner of The E cig Flavourium and leader of the Vapor Advocates of Ontario movement

Introduction:

A meeting was held at the request of the E cig Flavourium to discuss youth vaping, survey data and educating adult smokers.

The Chair opened the meeting by doing round table introductions.

The Chair reminded participants that this meeting is subject to disclosure as per HC's [Openness and Transparency policies](#). In the interest of transparency, the Department stated that it would be making a record of the meeting publicly available. The [handling of information and privacy notice](#) was mentioned and acknowledged.

HC also referred to Article 5.3 of the [World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control](#), its international obligation to protect tobacco control policies from the vested interests of the tobacco industry.

Subjects:

Youth vaping

Ms. Papaioannoy referenced the letter that the Minister of Health sent retail associations concerning youth vaping and indicated

that she is committed to working with HC to address this issue. Ms. Papaioannoy stated that enforcement for youth access is one of the areas that could be strengthened with respect to youth vaping and pointed to an example of a vape shop that sells to minors within her community. Ms. Papaioannoy indicated that she has been in contact with HC's Regulatory Operations and Enforcement Branch but is concerned that no enforcement action will be taken on sales to minors since there is no federal directive in place.

HC assured Ms. Papaioannoy that regardless of whether there is a formal directive in place, all reported complaints regarding alleged contraventions to the Tobacco and Vaping Products Act (TVPA) are taken seriously and followed up on.

New survey data on flavours and nicotine

Ms. Papaioannoy informed HC of a new online survey that is being conducted by Dr. Christopher Lalonde to better understand the role of flavours and nicotine in vaping. Ms. Papaioannoy indicated that Dr. Lalonde has recruited 2,500 participants to date and hopes to recruit up to 5,000 participants by the time it is complete. Ms. Papaioannoy stated that Dr. Lalonde will share the data as it becomes available and that more information can be found on www.rights4vapers.com.

Ms. Papaioannoy spoke about some of her experiences at retail with respect to flavours and nicotine. Ms. Papaioannoy believes that vaping presents an opportunity to save lives. At her retail establishment, she implements a protocol to help people quit which includes: 1) checking identification, 2) asking customers about their smoking behaviour (how much, how frequently, where, etc.) and 3) discussing/recommending the level of nicotine to use.

HC asked Ms. Papaioannoy to speak to her experience with flavours and nicotine and whether some of her customers quit vaping altogether. Ms. Papaioannoy said that some of her customers enjoy custard-type flavours (e.g., butterscotch) since it gives them a feeling of fullness but does not taste like tobacco. She also noted that many people choose flavours based on how they think they would be perceived (e.g., some men do not like to choose butterscotch or fruity flavours). With respect to nicotine, she indicated that a lot of her customers stop at 3 mg/mL or 1.5mg/mL and that some customers eventually go vape free.

Educating adult smokers

In 2018, HC had prepared and held a short, targeted consultation on a list of proposed statements that compare the health effects arising from the use of a vaping product or its emissions with those of a tobacco product. These proposed relative risk statements were developed based on consensus conclusions reached by the 2018 *Public Health Consequences of E-Cigarettes* report prepared by the U.S. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine,^{[\[i\]](#)} and in consultation with the external Scientific Advisory Board on Vaping Products.^{[\[ii\]](#)} Proposed statements were also reviewed through public opinion research and shared with some stakeholders in a targeted consultation in 2018. Ms. Papaioannoy asked HC if these relative risk statements are available to the public. HC indicated that the proposed statements would have to be authorized via a regulatory proposal that would create regulations allowing the use of the statements in permitted vaping product promotion.

Ms. Papaioannoy stated that many individuals are confused with the messaging around vaping and that Health Canada's youth vaping prevention campaign is reaching smokers. She pointed to anecdotal examples where doctors have advised patients to go

back to smoking cigarettes after being misdiagnosed with “popcorn lung”. She indicated that people need support from their physicians and medical professionals. She also mentioned that others are confused by the messaging about the presence of metals in vaping and the notion of vasoconstriction caused by nicotine.

Ms. Papaioannoy indicated that there is an opportunity at point of sale to inform consumers and that messaging should be balanced. She recommends that the messaging include two pieces: 1) “vaping is not as bad as smoking” targeted to current smokers and 2) “you do not want to be addicted” targeted to youth/non-smokers. She also mentioned that the public health handouts do not identify vaping as an option for smoking cessation but should.

Working together

Ms. Papaioannoy informed HC of the community vaping coalition that she is trying to establish. She noted that a non-scientific advisory body would be beneficial in representing the voices of those with lived experience.

Conclusion:

The meeting was then concluded.

Documents:

- N/A