



The Royal Australasian
College of Physicians

Lack of legislation putting Australian youth at risk

Media Release

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The Royal Australasian College of Physicians has called for a national approach to banning the sale of e-cigarettes to minors, stating that current legislation is not protecting the country's youth.

The call follows new research from medical journal *Lancet Respiratory Medicine* which revealed e-cigarettes may in fact be hampering, rather than helping, the efforts of nicotine addicts. Regular smokers looking to quit were 28% less likely to do so while using e-cigarettes compared to those who didn't.

RACP President, Laureate Professor Nicholas Talley said there were many misconceptions about e-cigarettes including that it can be used as a support mechanism when quitting regular cigarettes.

"This research suggests that this is not the case. By using e-cigarettes there is a significant risk that we are inadvertently re-normalising smoking behaviour among individuals and even reintroducing a culture of smoking in our community," explained Professor Talley.

"And, of course, the jury is still out on what damage e-cigarettes cause so we must treat them with great scepticism."

Professor Talley said there are currently legislative loopholes around the importation of e-cigarettes in Australia and closing these gaps is critical in order to protect young people against these devices.

"In Australia, liquids for e-cigarettes cannot legally contain nicotine but because the market is unregulated, some users are inhaling nicotine whether they know it or not.

"It is also concerning that they are sold and promoted using strategies to target non-smokers and the younger generation.

"It's time to legislate. We need to help stop our youth being put at risk from potentially deadly nicotine addictions."

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About The Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP): The RACP trains, educates and advocates on behalf of more than 15,000 physicians and 7,500 trainee physicians across Australia and New Zealand.

The College represents a broad range of medical specialties including general medicine, paediatrics and child health, cardiology, respiratory medicine, neurology, oncology, public health medicine, occupational and environmental medicine, palliative medicine, sexual health medicine, rehabilitation medicine, geriatric medicine and addiction medicine. Beyond the drive for medical excellence, the RACP is committed to developing health and social policies which bring vital improvements to the wellbeing of patients.

The College offers 60 training pathways. These lead to the award of one of seven qualifications that align with 45 specialist titles recognised by the Medical Board of Australia or allow for registration in nine vocational scopes with the Medical Council of New Zealand.