

# THE PRACTICAL USE OF ELECTRONIC CIGARETTES FOR TOBACCO HARM REDUCTION

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## **Introduction:**

People with drug and alcohol problems have a very high smoking prevalence but lower quit rates than the general population. Electronic cigarettes are an emerging tobacco harm reduction tool.

## **Aims:**

This interactive workshop will provide the information clinicians need to know about e-cigarettes and practical guidelines on how to counsel smokers on their use.

## **Approach:**

Alex Wodak will discuss the role of electronic cigarettes for tobacco harm reduction. While meeting the criteria for a legitimate harm reduction strategy, e-cigarettes have faced the same intense hostility as other new harm reduction strategies such as needle syringe programs and methadone treatment. Coral Gartner will review the emerging evidence for vaping in populations with low smoking quit rates. While vaping still carries some risk, chemical, toxicological and clinical studies indicate it is substantially less harmful than smoking. Stephen Elsom is an ex-smoker who now vapes. After many failed attempts, he gave up on quitting until he tried an e-cigarette 2 years ago and has not smoked or felt any desire to smoke since. Colin Mendelsohn will present the practical information needed to discuss e-cigarettes with smokers. This includes the rationale of treatment, indications for use, legal and safety issues and how to use the devices. He will demonstrate current models, discuss device and e-liquid selection, where to purchase supplies and how to legally prescribe nicotine.

## **Conclusions:**

Electronic cigarettes are a legitimate harm reduction tool for smokers who are unable or unwilling to quit with current treatments.

## **Disclosure of Interest Statement**

Alex Wodak has no conflicts of interest to declare. Coral Gartner is a chief investigator on a number of projects examining the effectiveness of vaping as a smoking cessation method which are funded by NHMRC, HIV Foundation Queensland, and VicHealth. She has received paid travel and accommodation to present on tobacco harm reduction for smokers living with HIV at the HIV Innovation Forum 2017, which is sponsored by an unrestricted educational grant from Gilead Sciences. Stephen Elsom has received payments for education and consulting from Lilly, Astra-Zeneca, Pfizer, Janssen & Janssen, and Otsuka-Lundbeck. Colin Mendelsohn has received payments from Pfizer Australia, GlaxoSmithKline and Johnson & Johnson Pacific for teaching, consulting and conference expenses.