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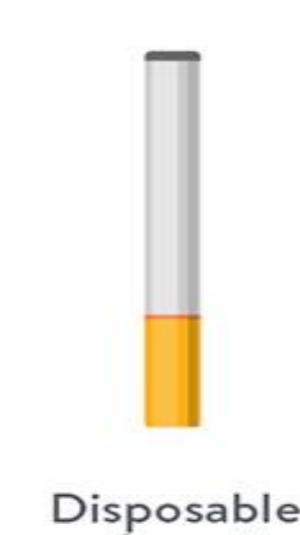
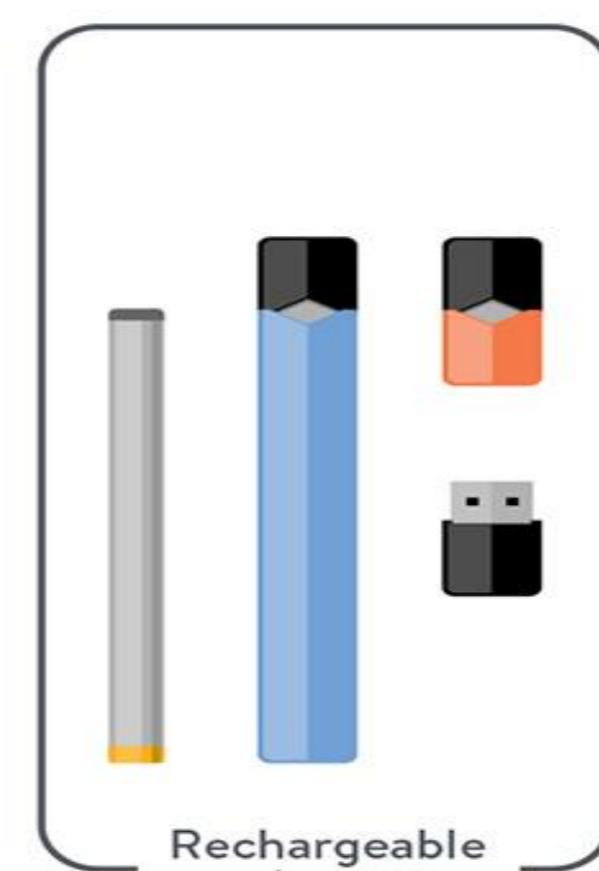
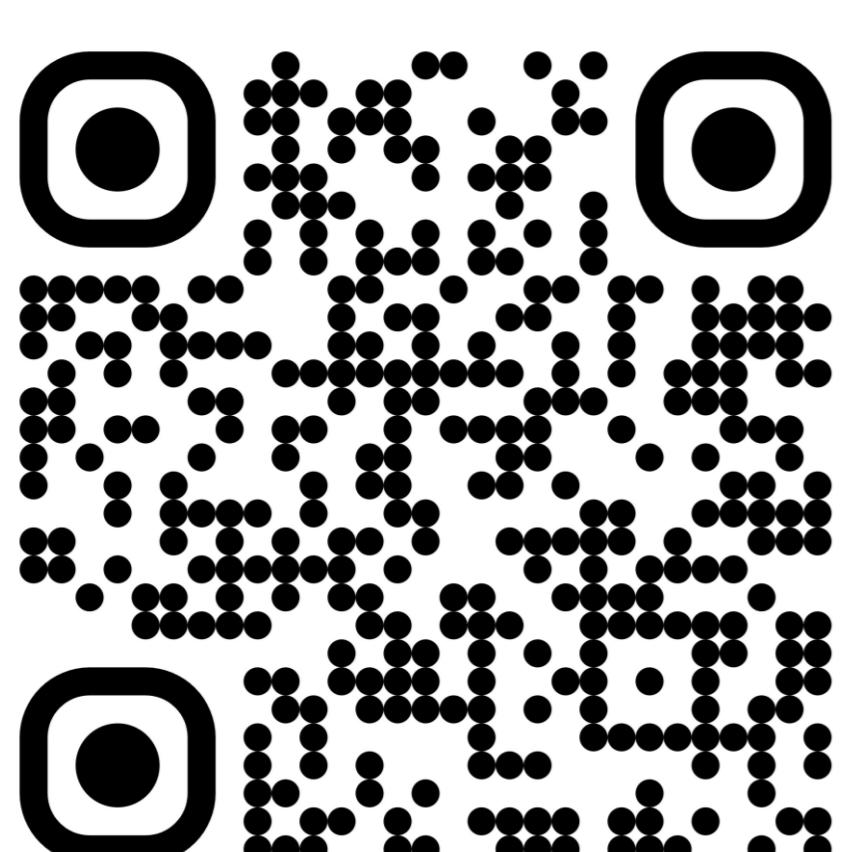
## BACKGROUND

A recent policy in October 2021 was introduced in Australia to limit a rapid increase in the number of e-cigarette users through regulation of nicotine containing e-liquid by accessing it only through prescription for the purpose of smoking cessation<sup>1</sup>.

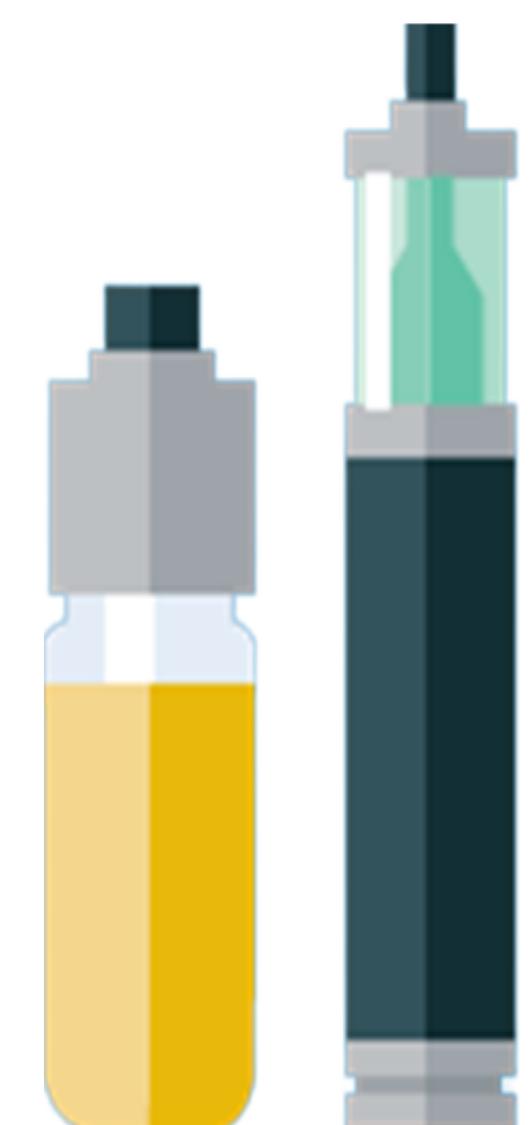
This study aims to explore GP's perceptions about the role of e-cigarettes, and understand factors informing their prescribing intentions of nicotine e-liquid as part of a smoking cessation plan.



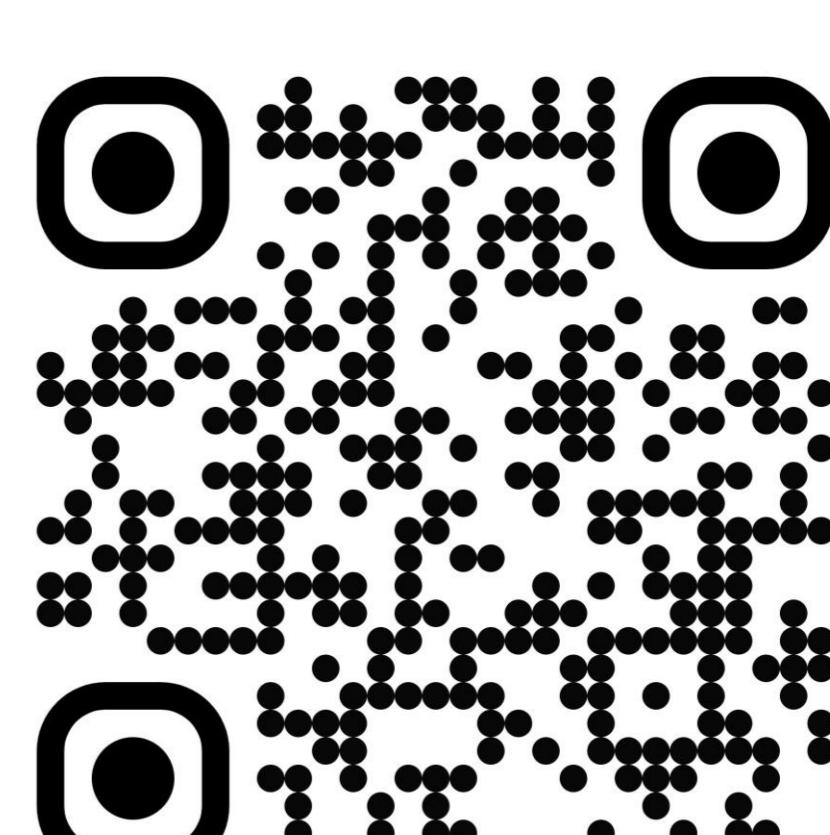
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E-cigarette devices<sup>2</sup>



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## RESULTS

### MAIN THEMES

Mixed perceptions on the safety of e-cigarettes in smoking cessation

Diverse views from GP's for recommending e-cigarettes to patients

Concerns of dual use and gateway effect to other tobacco products

GP's understanding of policy was limited

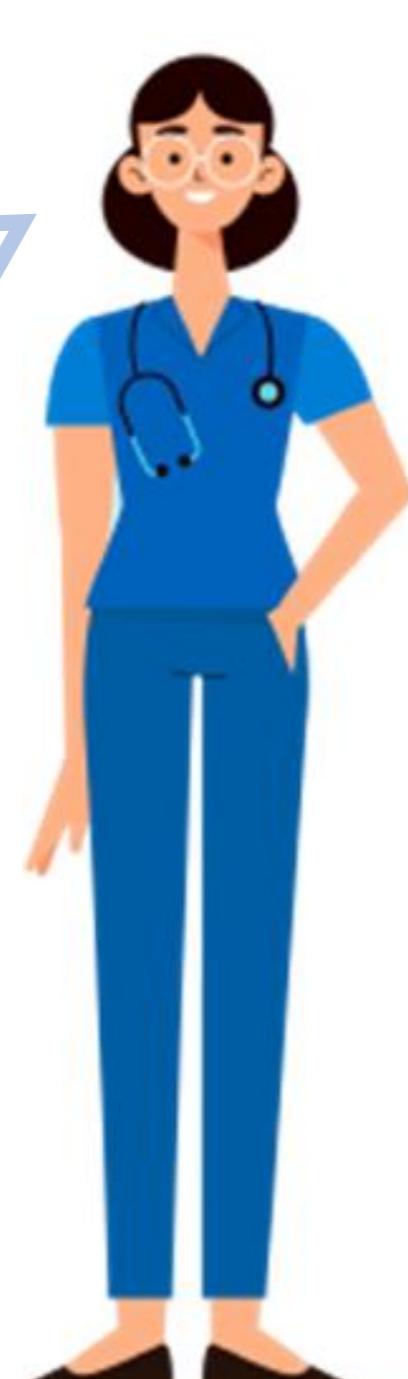
Lack of confidence and knowledge in prescribing e-cigarettes to patients

*"It has the potential to become a window or a door to other products and a pathway to smoking". (GP#2, M, 6 years of practice)*



**GP's held diverse views about prescribing nicotine e-liquids for smoking cessation. These were driven by limited information and understanding of current policy guidelines.**

*"I think I need more knowledge and training in this area. I probably would prescribe them more if I had that. I don't know enough about them." (GP#9 F, 4 years of practice)*



**Clearer guidelines are required to enable GP's to provide advice to patients that wish to use e-cigarettes as smoking cessation aids.**

*"As a last resort to my older patients who are desperate to quit and have failed using all other methods." (GP#4, F, 7 years of practice)*



*"Concerns about harms and not knowing if e-cigarettes actually do help people stop smoking, to be worth recommending them to use." (GP#1, M, 46 years of practice)*

## CONCLUSION

GP's had diverse views about e-cigarettes for smoking cessation. Concerns about safety and efficacy and limited understanding of current policy guidelines were strong influences on prescribing intentions.

GP's voiced concerns about the possibility of e-cigarettes being a gateway to smoking and other tobacco products.

Limited confidence to have discussions and answer patient questions about e-cigarettes arose from insufficient knowledge and concerns about the scientific evidence about e-cigarettes. Clearer guidance, which is easily accessible to GP's is required.



### References

<sup>1</sup>TGA. Nicotine vaping products: Information for prescribers; 2022

<sup>2</sup>Allegro Pediatrics. <https://www.allegropediatrics.com/blog/blog/from-our-docs/e-cigarette-qanda-with-dr-spanier>

