Barriers and facilitators to switching from smoking to vaping: Advice from vapers

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Abstract
Introduction and Aims: Information available to consumers about nicotine vaping products varies according to the regulatory environment. A common information source in Australia, where nicotine vaping products are highly regulated, is advice from vapers. The aim of this study was to report on what advice current vapers would give to someone new to vaping.

Design and Methods: Australian vapers were recruited in 2016 via the International Tobacco Control Four-Country Smoking and Vaping survey of smokers and ex-smokers, as well as a separate recruitment process that targeted vapers. A total of 384 of 559 eligible participants responded to an open-ended question about barriers to switching from smoking to vaping, and what advice they would give to new vapers.

Results: While some participants reported switching from smoking to vaping easily, others described an adjustment period. Difficulties included learning about technical aspects of nicotine vaping products, finding the 'right' combination of device and liquid, and accessing nicotine liquid given that it cannot legally be sold. Many accounts of satisfaction with quitting smoking and improved health were provided.

Discussion and conclusions: Advice from current vapers is likely to be particularly influential in Australia, where information about vaping is not easily available from health organisations or official government sources. This research shows that advice to new vaper centres around experimentation with devices and flavours and finding trustworthy suppliers of nicotine liquid. It provides an insight into the initial challenges associated with switching from smoking to nicotine vaping products in environments where access to nicotine liquid is highly restricted.

Recommended Citation