

Call of Abstracts - "International conference on the E-Cigarette: patterns of use and health impacts"



Call of abstracts

"International conference on the E-Cigarette: patterns of use and health impacts" - Paris, on 5-6th December 2022

Submission form

Symposium proposal

Contact details of the corresponding organiser

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Background information

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Symposium

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Health impact

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Symposium title

Public report and recommendations of the High Council of Public Health (Haut conseil de la santé publique), France on the benefit/risk profile of electronic cigarettes.

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Number of chairpersons

2

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Symposium proposal

Abstract of the symposium

Background: The HCPH was requested by health authorities to provide an updated review on the potential benefits and risks of electronic cigarettes, called electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS).

Objectives: The working group of HCPH had to answer 4 questions.

1. Are ENDS an aid to quit smoking and what can be their role in a global smoking cessation strategy?
- 1.2. Can these products be considered as risk reduction tools?
2. What are the answers in specific populations such as individuals with comorbidities, youth and pregnant smokers?
3. Is ENDS use a gateway for becoming a smoker among youth?
4. Is there a risk that the widespread use of these products renormalizes tobacco use?

Added value: The working group's findings and recommendations were based on an extensive literature search and analysis and the audition of stakeholders, with particular emphasis on the methodological

quality of the reviewed publications. Potential recommendations were debated, final recommendations were approved by all members and finally endorsed by the HCPH. The working group produced 13 recommendations. Each of the four presentations in this symposium presents and discusses one of the evaluation questions and related recommendations.

Main messages

This symposium presents and discusses the 13 recommendations for public authorities regarding electronic cigarettes issued by the High council of public health, France in 2022

Number of presentations

4

Presentation 1

Title: Are ENDS an aid to quit smoking and what can be its role in a global smoking cessation strategy? Can these products be considered as risk reduction tools?

Author: Ivan Berlin

Background: Electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) with or without nicotine are widely used worldwide. Health authorities', institutions' and practitioners' opinion about their efficacy in helping smokers quit smoking is widely divergent.

Aims: To answer the questions i) whether these products are smoking cessation tools and ii) whether they reduce smoking associated health risks.

Method: Extensive literature search and analysis of published materials with particular emphasis on the methodological quality of the reviewed publications. Potential recommendations were debated, final recommendations were approved by all members and endorsed by the HCPH.

Results: i) None of the published randomized studies shows superiority of ENDS over placebo in double blind comparisons. Two meta-analyses provide contradictory results. Only one pragmatic, randomized but open trial shows superiority of ENDS over nicotine replacement therapy (of any kind). In all studies, the safety assessment was poor and below international standards. ii) To assess whether ENDS reduce risk, assessment of all-cause mortality, cause specific mortality in long-term highly powered epidemiological studies are needed. These trials should compare exclusive ENDS use, double use with continuous abstinence from both tobacco and ENDS use and with continuing smoking. As of today, no such trials have been published.

Conclusions: i) Data are insufficient to assess the benefit/risk profile of ENDS in smoking cessation compared to other health care interventions. Therefore, the working group does not suggest that health care professionals promote its use among smokers. As much as possible available medications with demonstrated efficacy should be used. The working group does not oppose to their use outside the health care system because their efficacy cannot be excluded and even a weak efficacy in large populations may provide public health effectiveness. ii) As of today, no conclusions can be drawn as to the benefit of ENDS on smoked tobacco associated health risks.

Presentation 2

Title : Recommendations of the French High Council of Public Health, France (HCPH) on the benefit/risk profile of electronic cigarettes among specific groups of smokers.

Author: Anne-Laurence Le Faou

Background: Specific groups of smokers include persons with smoking-related diseases, psychiatric comorbidities or co-addictions and pregnant smokers. The HCPH WG answered two questions: 1. Are ENDS an aid to quit smoking and 2) what can be their role in a global smoking cessation strategy?

Method: A literature search with a focus on the methodological quality of the reviewed publications, led to the recommendation after discussion between the team members, its approval and official endorsement by the HCPH.

Results and main conclusions: Methodologically sound randomized controlled trials (RCT) were lacking. Secondary analysis of RCT and observational studies pointed out that among these groups, ENDS were frequently used, with the main objective of quitting. A RCT conducted among smokers with addictions (n=100), comparing nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) with ENDS found no significant difference in the 12 week-abstinence. Moreover, an ongoing RCT at the time of the HCPH work was published in 2022, comparing NRT with ENDS in pregnant smokers (n=1140). Validated quit rates at the end of pregnancy were not significantly different in the two groups. For psychiatric smokers recruited in RCTs using pharmacological and/or behavioral treatments to quit, secondary analysis showed that ENDS use rose until 40% in participants with no effect on cessation. Finally, in smokers with somatic diseases, ex-smokers with COPD used significantly more often ENDS to quit compared with smokers without comorbidities while ex-smokers with cancer used them significantly less often. Consequently, the HCPH suggested that in specific groups of smokers with previous treatment failures, rejection of evidence-based treatments, ENDS could be proposed to increase the chance of quitting on a public health purpose, except for pregnant smokers, consistent with several international recommendations. In conclusion, research is needed to improve knowledge on ENDS potential aid to quit as well as safety in these groups.

Presentation 3

Title: Is there a risk that ENDS encourage a renormalization of tobacco consumption in France?

Author: Karine Gallopel-Morvan

Background: This abstract presents the scientific synthesis and recommendations for the following question addressed to HCPH: Is there a risk that the widespread use of the ENDS renormalizes tobacco use? The hypothesis of renormalization is that the presence and strong visibility of the ENDS would renormalize the tobacco by: i/ (re)given a good image of tobacco products (by effect of similarity between the 2 products); ii/ leading young people to perceive tobacco consumption as a positive behavior; iii/ reducing the effect of anti-smoking policies (e.g. less decline in youth smoking, "nicotine gateway").

Method: A literature search on these questions led to the recommendation after discussion between the team members, its approval and official endorsement by the HCPHF.

Results and main conclusions: In 2021, data were insufficient to conclude that ENDS use results in the renormalization of tobacco use. Some research in the USA has revealed that young non-smokers have experimented vaping. However, such issue was not observed in the other countries studied (young vapers are generally smokers). Apart from these US studies, the current literature does not validate the hypothesis that e-cigarettes renormalize smoking behavior and tobacco products. It is important to mention limitations: i/ research on renormalization due to the ENDS was conducted on a limited period of time (yet the evolution of a norm takes time and behavioral changes too); ii/ very few longitudinal studies have been conducted; iii/ No studies were implemented in France (many in USA and UK). If data are insufficient to conclude that ENDS use results in the renormalization of tobacco use in France, the literature shows that the strong presence and marketing of ENDS normalizes vaping among young people. For this reason, marketing and advertising regulation of ENDS should be maintained in France as well as ban sales to minors (but for reasons other than the renormalization hypothesis).

Presentation 4

Title: Is ENDS use a gateway for becoming a smoker among youths?

Author: François Alla

Background: This presentation provides the scientific synthesis and recommendations for the following question addressed to HCPH: is ENDS use a gateway for becoming a smoker among youths?

Method: A literature search on these questions led to the recommendation after discussion between the team members, its approval and official endorsement by the HCPH.

Results and main conclusions: Data favors the hypothesis that ENDS use may promote smoking among youth: the relationship between the initiation of ENDS and smoking initiation has been documented by several cohort studies. However, methodological insufficiencies and cross-cultural differences may attenuate this conclusion. The objective of delaying the initiation and use of ENDS in adolescents who do not use tobacco is therefore based on the precautionary principle. The HCPH recommends that the ban on sales to minors be maintained and that measures be taken to ensure that it is effectively enforced and monitored.

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Pharmaceutical Industry Source

No

Tobacco/E-Cigarette Industry Source

No

Declaration of interest

The submitter declares that during the past 5 years have a direct nor indirect link (professional*, personal or financial**) with the tobacco and e-cigarette companies

No