

# 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

Poster & oral presentation

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## Background information

### Type of submission

Oral or poster

### Theme of conference

Patterns of use

## Keywords

Addiction

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User profiles

## Abstract title

Self-reported signs of Substance Use Disorder in e-cigarette online forums

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## Abstract details (poster & oral)

### Background, method, results and conclusions

#### Background

As of yet, it is unclear how addictive e-cigarettes are. The aim of our qualitative study was to investigate whether and how e-cigarette users report signs of dependence in e-cigarette online forums.

#### Methods

We searched for the three largest German-speaking e-cigarette online forums via Google search. The identified forums had up to 60,000 users and 900,000 to 3,3 million posts. We used a netnographic approach to investigate posts in those forums. The data was coded with regard to the DSM-5 criteria for Substance Use Disorder. First, a deductive content analysis was performed to see whether e-cigarette users report signs of Substance Use Disorder corresponding to the DSM-5. Second, data was coded inductively.

#### Results

In the three forums, we identified 5,337 threads containing relevant information. Of these, 451 threads were included in the data analysis. The analysis yielded that users report experiencing signs of a substance use disorder, such as craving e-cigarettes or withdrawal symptoms. However, our inductive analysis showed that users also described the absence of signs, and reported e.g. successful attempts to reduce the nicotine dosage. Reports of the absence of signs of Substance Use Disorder were more frequent than of their presence. Importantly, the absence of signs was primarily experienced in contrast to prior tobacco smoking.

#### Conclusion

This study was the first to use a netnographic approach to show that e-cigarette users experience signs of addiction in line with DSM-5 criteria for Substance Use Disorder. However, reports in the online forums also imply that many e-cigarette users feel in control of their usage behavior, especially contrasting their prior use of tobacco cigarettes.

### Main messages

- E-cigarette users report experiencing signs of Substance Use Disorder according to the DSM-5 such as craving or withdrawal symptoms.
- The absence of such signs was reported more frequently than the presence.

### Type of study / research

Qualitative

### Geography of the study

Europe

### Funding of study

#### Federal source

Yes

**State source**

No

**Nonprofit Grant Funding Entity Source**

No

**Nonprofit Grant Funding Entity Source**

No

**Academic Institution Source**

No

**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