



E-cigarette use and access among two samples in Australia who regularly use illicit drugs, 2023

Udesha Chandrasena, Amy Peacock

Table 2: Past six month use of non-prescribed e-cigarettes, EDRS and IDRS, nationally, 2023.

	EDRS N=708 % (n)	IDRS N=820 % (n)
Non-prescribed e-cigarette use in the six months preceding the interview	68 (482)	34 (276)
	n=481	n=266
Among those who reported recent nonprescribed use, the percentage of participants using e-cigarettes containing nicotine	96 (463)	81 (215)
Among those who reported recent use of non-prescribed e-cigarettes containing nicotine, where did you obtain your e-cigarette products from in the past six months?	n=456	/
Physical vape store	58	

Table 3: Difficulty accessing e-cigarettes containing nicotine in the past six months, EDRS and IDRS, nationally, 2023.

Note. (-) Values suppressed due to small size (n ≤ 5 but not 0). / Indicates question was not asked in 2023. The response option 'Don't know' was excluded from analysis. ^ Participants could endorse multiple responses.

Figure 1:

regulatory challenge as it creates uncertainty surrounding the original source of these products, and it is unclear whether restrictions and enforcement measures will directly impact these distribution channels.

Additionally, the national EDRS and IDRS reports show that 64% and 44% of participants who use non-prescribed e-cigarettes, respectively, report not using these products for smoking cessation purposes (8, 6). While those who are using non-prescribed e-cigarettes for smoking cessation purposes may be eligible to obtain a prescription and transition to prescribed e-cigarettes, there are limited options available for people using e-cigarettes for reasons unrelated to smoking cessation. Coupled with the perception that e-cigarette use is less harmful compared to traditional tobacco smoking (which can be accessed without a prescription) and the varied evidence on the harms and benefits associated with e-cigarettes (9), increased bans and enforcement may feed demand for diverted and black-market products among this group.

References

1. Zhang H, Wang Y, Shen L, Gu Y, Shao F. E-cigarette use and regulation: A comparative analysis between the United States, the UK, and China. *The American Journal of Bioethics*. 2022 Oct 3;22(10):2931.
2. Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA). Vaping Hub [Internet]. Australia: TGA; 2024. Available from: 19 February 2024]. Available from: <https://www.tga.gov.au/products/unapproved-therapeutic-goods/vaping-hub>.
3. Jongenelis MI. E-cigarette product preferences of Australian adolescent and adult users: a 2022 study. *BMC Public Health*. 2023;23:220.
4. Sutherland R, Karlsson A, King C, Uporova J, Chandrasena U, Jones F, Gibbs D, Price O, Dietze P, Lenton

Funding and Copyright

Funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care under the Drug and Alcohol Program ©NDARC, UNSW SYDNEY 202