



28<sup>th</sup> February 2023

Hon Yvette D'Ath MP  
Minister for Health and Ambulance Services  
1 William Street  
Brisbane QLD 4000

Via email only: [health@ministerial.qld.gov.au](mailto:health@ministerial.qld.gov.au)

Dear Minister D'Ath,

### Re: Support of smoking products reform and the need for urgent implementation

Lung Foundation Australia, Heart Foundation, the Thoracic Society of Australia and New Zealand, Public Health Association Australia and Asthma Australia commend the release of the Decision Regulatory Impact Statement for the consultation on *Reducing the negative effects of smoking in Queensland*.<sup>i</sup> **We support the new reforms and we highlight the need for urgent implementation of all reforms to protect the health of Queenslanders, with particular need for strong monitoring and enforcement efforts in the upcoming budget.**

We recently provided feedback to the draft Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Bill 2023 (**the Bill**), and believe the reforms proposed provide an opportunity to address tobacco smoking rates in Queensland, whilst also taking strong action to reduce the use of e-cigarettes. Together we share with you our strong support for the outcomes in the Decision Regulatory Impact Statement, especially the implementation of a positive licensing scheme to tackle the currently poorly regulated smoking and other products market and highlight **the need for significantly increased enforcement and monitoring to ensure compliance with the legislation (and existing laws)**. We welcome the announcement of the Bill and would be delighted to support in sharing with the media once brought to parliament and upon implementation.

As you know, the recent global systemic review published by Australian National University (ANU) identified that young non-smokers who vape are three times more likely to take up cigarette smoking than non-vapers and the use of e-cigarettes increases the risk of smoking uptake, addiction, poisoning, seizures, trauma, burns, and lung injury.<sup>ii</sup> Between 2016 and 2019, the proportion of people who had ever used e-cigarettes in Australia rose from 8.8% to 11.3% with the rise among young adults particularly notable.<sup>iii</sup> Importantly, this data does not reflect the current e-cigarette use, specifically in Queensland, and does not include individuals under 18 years, where e-cigarette use is of particular concern.

E-cigarettes are being marketed heavily through social media, often with fruity, alcohol or confectionary flavours to entice youth and present the products as fun and safe. E-liquids contain a cocktail of chemicals and can cause serious health impacts to young children and alarmingly potentially lethal side effects in small doses. The Queensland Poisons Information Centre reported a 486% increase in calls for children exposed to e-cigarettes and vaping products since 2020, highlighting significant poisonings issues.<sup>iv</sup> We also

commend the recent [Vape Truths initiative](#) to create awareness of the harms of e-cigarettes and the development of future vaping campaigns. However, the rising use of e-cigarettes is continuing to cause significant public health risks, and the QLD Government must do more to protect residents from harm. Promisingly, there is strong community support for action on e-cigarettes, with a recent survey showing that **85% of Queenslanders think the government should do more to protect children from vaping** (second highest level of support in Australia).<sup>v</sup>

We look forward to seeing the draft Bill being brought to parliament and we encourage this to be done as soon as possible, with investment to support implementation (in particular of monitoring, enforcement and awareness) to be included in the upcoming budget. If you would like to discuss this matter further, please contact Paige Preston, Senior Manager of Advocacy and Policy at Lung Foundation Australia on 0423 734 885 or [paigep@lungfoundation.com.au](mailto:paigep@lungfoundation.com.au).

Yours sincerely,



**Mark Brooke**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Lung Foundation Australia



**Professor John Upham**  
President  
The Thoracic Society of Australia and New Zealand



**Sheree Hughes**  
General Manager, Queensland  
National Heart Foundation



**Paige Preston**  
Queensland Branch President  
Public Health Association of Australia



**Michele Goldman**  
Chief Executive Officer  
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**Cc:** Mark West, Executive Director Prevention Strategy Branch Strategy, Policy and Reform Division, Queensland Health, [mark.west@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:mark.west@health.qld.gov.au)

<sup>i</sup> Queensland Health, 2022, Reducing the negative effects of smoking in Queensland - Decision Regulatory Impact Statement, <https://s3.treasury.qld.gov.au/files/Reducing-the-negative-effects-of-smoking-in-Queensland-DRIS.pdf>

<sup>ii</sup> Banks E, Yazidjoglou A, Brown S, Nguyen M, Martin M, Beckwith K, Daluwatta A, Campbell S, Joshy G. Electronic cigarettes and health outcomes: systematic review of global evidence. Report for the Australian Department of Health. National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health, Canberra: April 2022

<sup>iii</sup> Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2020) National Drug Strategy Household Survey 2019, AIHW, Australian Government, accessed 21 December 2022. doi:10.25816/e42p-a447

<sup>iv</sup> Davey, M & Rose, T 2022, Australian government to crack down on nicotine e-cigarettes as rates of teen vaping skyrocket <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2022/nov/29/government-to-crack-down-on-nicotine-e-cigarettes-as-rates-of-teen-vaping-skyrocket>

<sup>v</sup> Lung Foundation Australia 2022, YouGov Survey. Available on request