



Health Canada Santé
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July 29, 2019

Stephanie Higginson
President
British Columbia School Trustees Association
Vancouver, British-Columbia
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Dear Stephanie Higginson,

Thank you for your letter of July 11, 2019, addressed to the Honourable Ginette Petitpas Taylor, Minister of Health, concerning vaping products. I have been asked to respond on the Minister's behalf.

Health Canada shares the concerns you raised as well as those of parents, educators and public health stakeholders about the troubling trend of youth vaping and is continuing to take action. The Government of Canada has already established a strong regulatory framework for vaping products, with a focus on preventing uptake by youth and non-smokers. The [Tobacco and Vaping Products Act](#) became law in May 2018. This Act sets a national minimum age of access for vaping products of 18 years with significant restrictions on the promotion of vaping products, including bans on lifestyle advertising, and testimonials and endorsements. The sale and promotion of vaping products with design features that are appealing to youth is prohibited, as is the promotion of vaping products with certain flavours, like candy, desserts, or soft drinks.

Health Canada is pursuing a comprehensive suite of actions to address youth vaping. Earlier this year, the Government of Canada proposed [new regulatory measures](#) to further restrict vaping product advertising. The regulatory measures under consideration would limit where advertisements could be displayed, require health warning messages on permitted advertisements, and further restrict the display of vaping products at points of sale. A summary of the comments received is now available on the Government of Canada's website at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/programs/consultation-measures-reduce-impact-vaping-products-advertising-youth-non-users-tobacco-products/notice-document/summary.html>. Health Canada is developing a regulatory package on an urgent basis, this is informed by the feedback received.

Health Canada posted another consultation document on April 11, 2019 seeking comments on [further measures to address and reverse the recent trends of youth vaping](#). Some of these additional measures could include examining the role of flavours, nicotine concentration and product design in making vaping products appealing to youth and non-smokers. This consultation closed on May 25, 2019.

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In addition to the important regulatory work being done to address youth vaping, we also launched a [national public education campaign](#) earlier this year to inform youth of the risks of vaping. The campaign also equips parents, teachers and other trusted adults with tools and resources to support conversations and discussions about the health risks of vaping products with youth. I would encourage you and your members to visit the campaign website: www.canada.ca/vaping-info.

The department has also increased its compliance and enforcement activities to verify industry compliance with the current prohibitions on the sale and promotion of vaping products. By the end of December 2019, Health Canada will have inspected 1,000 vaping specialty establishments and 2,000 convenience stores, representing a significant increase in actions to verify compliance with regulations of vaping products. To report any suspected violations, please contact the Tobacco Control Directorate, Health Canada, by email at hc.tcp.questions-plt.sc@canada.ca or by phone at 1-866-318-1116.

You might be interested to know that unlike cigarettes, vaping products do not contain tobacco and do not involve burning or producing smoke. While they may contain nicotine, which is highly addictive, vaping products typically only contain a fraction of the 7,000 chemicals found in tobacco or tobacco smoke, and at lower levels. For people who smoke, vaping delivers nicotine in a less harmful way than smoking cigarettes, and completely replacing cigarette smoking with vaping will reduce one's exposure to harmful chemicals. There are short-term general health improvements if a person completely switches from smoking cigarettes to using vaping products. However, if a person does not smoke, vaping can increase their exposure to some harmful substances that could negatively affect their health. Vaping is not for youth and non-smokers.

For more information about vaping, the applicable laws, its risks and potential benefits for people who smoke, including information on how vaping products are regulated, please visit: www.canada.ca/vaping.

Please be assured that we will continue to take action to protect the health of Canadians.

Yours sincerely,

James Van Loon, Director General
Tobacco Control Directorate
Controlled Substances and Cannabis Branch
Health Canada