

# Australian Trial Finds Vaping Nearly Three Times More Effective Than Nicotine Gums or Lozenges

*Experts urge policymakers to protect access for adults as UK disposable ban fuels illicit trade*

BRISTOL, UNITED KINGDOM, October 22, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A major Australian clinical trial published in the Annals of Internal Medicine has found that vaporized nicotine products (VNPs) helped almost three times as many smokers quit compared to nicotine gum or lozenges, with fewer side effects.

The randomised controlled trial, one of the largest of its kind, tracked more than 1,000 socially disadvantaged smokers across 12 months. Results showed 28.4% of participants using nicotine vapes achieved continuous six-month abstinence, compared with just 9.6% using traditional nicotine replacement therapy (NRT). The difference was statistically robust, with a greater than 99% probability that vaping is superior to gums and lozenges (Ann Intern Med, 2025).

“(In another) ... [landmark study](#) published in the journal Addiction, the smoking rate in New Zealand fell twice as fast as in Australia between 2016 and 2023. NZ’s more pragmatic approach is accelerating the decline in smoking, while Australia’s



Vaporised nicotine products (VNPs) helped almost three times as many smokers quit compared to nicotine gum or lozenges, with fewer side effects.



Results showed more participants using nicotine vapes achieved continuous six-month abstinence.

restrictive policies are leaving smokers behind. One of the most overlooked benefits of vaping is its potential to reduce health disparities,” said Dr. Colin Mendelsohn, tobacco treatment specialist and study co-author, in an opinion piece published in Australia’s [Sydney Morning Herald](#).

“If vaping is the key driver of this success, as appears likely, then Australia’s current approach isn’t just failing, it’s costing lives. A more liberal, consumer-driven model (similar to that of NZ) could accelerate the decline in smoking, reduce the health gap for disadvantaged and Indigenous communities and diminish the harms from an unregulated black market,” he added.



Vaping is now the most used, and among the most effective, quit-smoking tools available to adults.

#### Equity, Safety, and Public Health Impact -

The study population included smokers on government pensions and allowances — groups disproportionately burdened by smoking-related illness. Notably, the vaping group also reported fewer side effects than the gum/lozenge group (incident rate ratio 0.75; 95% CI 0.65–0.88;  $P < 0.001$ ).

“Helping vulnerable groups quit smoking has always been the toughest challenge in tobacco control,” said Joel Riley, head pharmacist at Vapelabs, Australia’s leading wholesaler of therapeutic vaping products.

“This trial shows vaping can be a powerful equaliser in public health. It is now the most used, and among the most effective, quit-smoking tools available to adults. Removing or restricting these options risks undoing years of progress in reducing smoking rates. A balanced approach that restricts youth access while keeping safer alternatives available to adults is the real solution,” said Riley.

#### Policy Lessons: Learning from the UK disposable Ban -

The findings arrive as the UK rolls out a ban on disposable vapes. While aimed at reducing youth use, early evidence shows the policy is driving adults toward illicit products:

- 61% of disposable users said they would consider buying illegal vapes post-ban.
- Enforcement agencies seized 1.2 million illicit vapes in 2024, double the year before.
- 26% of former disposable users reported turning to tobacco or illegal products within months of the ban.
- Experts caution that poorly balanced policies risk undermining cessation gains.

“The solution isn’t to ban vaping or to try to restrict it into obscurity. It’s to regulate it sensibly – encouraging smokers to switch while implementing reasonable safeguards to protect youth. NZ has shown us what works. It’s time we paid attention,” Dr. Mendelsohn emphasised in his opinion piece.

The implications of Australia’s findings extend well beyond its borders. In the UK, where the ban on disposables risks fuelling illicit trade, this trial underscores the importance of maintaining access to regulated alternatives that genuinely help adults quit. Similarly, in the US, where debates continue over balancing youth prevention with harm reduction, the evidence provides a valuable benchmark – vaping, when regulated and accessible, can deliver significant public health gains without driving smokers back to tobacco or underground markets.

“This Australian trial is a wake-up call for policymakers everywhere. The science shows vaping can be life-changing for adult smokers, but only if access to regulated products is protected. As the UK navigates its disposable ban and the US weighs its next steps, it’s vital we strike a balance, safeguarding youth while ensuring millions of adults aren’t pushed back to tobacco or the black market,” said Andrew Koh, Head of Brand, Marketing and Communications at AIRSCREAM Group.

Koh also emphasised that bans risk undermining public health progress without strong enforcement to tackle illicit trade, and that regulators must protect adult access to safer alternatives while ensuring robust controls keep products out of the wrong hands.

#### Call to Action -

Health experts urge governments to:

- Protect adult access to regulated therapeutic vapes as a frontline quit aid.
- Invest in enforcement against illicit supply instead of blanket bans.
- Integrate vaping into cessation pathways alongside behavioural support for maximum impact.

#### Notes to Editors -

1. Vaporized Nicotine Products for Smoking Cessation Among People Experiencing Social Disadvantage: A Randomized Clinical Trial

Publication: Annals of Internal Medicine, Volume 178, Number 8

<https://doi.org/10.7326/ANNALS-24-03531>

2. Do the differing vaping and smoking trends in Australia and New Zealand reflect different regulatory policies?

<https://doi.org/10.1111/add.70006>

3. Cochrane Review on e-cigarettes and smoking cessation (Jan 2025):

<https://www.cochranelibrary.com/cdsr/doi/10.1002/14651858.CD010216.pub9/full>

4. UK disposable vape ban coverage (BBC <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c80kxx2xr77o1>, Guardian <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2025/jul/29/third-of-uk-teenagers-who-vape->

[will-go-on-to-start-smoking-research-shows\]\)](#)

Additional scientific references available on request.

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