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Dear Minister,

The next government's once in a generation opportunity to clamp down on tobacco addiction.

The Thoracic Society (TSANZ) supports steps made by the current government towards a Smokefree New Zealand by 2025. What we don't want to see is for e-cigarettes to replace tobacco cigarettes and plague a new generation of tobacco-addicted New Zealanders with a lifetime of addiction and ill-health.

The TSANZ was relieved to hear the current Prime Minister's recent announcement, promising to cap vaping stores to 600, clamp down on licencing and store-front advertising requirements for would-be retailers, and increase penalties faced by any adult who sells to a minor. These are sensible next steps, but more needs to be done to protect young New Zealander's lungs.

About the TSANZ

The TSANZ is a health promotion charity whose mission is to lead, support and enable all health workers and researchers who aim to prevent, cure, and relieve disability caused by lung disease. The TSANZ is the only peak body in both Australia and New Zealand that represents all health professionals working in all fields of respiratory health.

The TSANZ is a leading advocate and provider of evidence-based policy for the prevention and management of respiratory conditions in Australia and New Zealand, undertakes professional education and training, is responsible for significant research administration, and coordinates an accredited respiratory laboratory program.

As a membership organisation for respiratory health professionals and researchers, the TSANZ has a world-class membership of nurses with expertise in respiratory nursing.

The gap in the current tobacco-control policy.

As a lung health promotion charity with members who are leading researchers, physicians, nurses, and allied health professionals across New Zealand and Australia, we want to see the next government's leaders do the right thing and tighten e-cigarette controls. It's the only way to protect future generations of rangatahi from the harms of e-cigarettes.

A 2023 Aotearoa New Zealand e-cigarette [study](#) showed that vapers are just as likely to start smoking tobacco cigarettes as smokers who successfully quit by using e-cigarettes. This data highlights that vaping may be a gateway for some young people to start smoking. We cannot see them as a totally harmless way to stop smoking. It is young New Zealanders who are paying the price for this health policy gap.

TSANZ asks the next government to build on the foundation of the 2022 tobacco-control legislation.

What we would like to see next from the October-elected government is a promise to delimit vape stores within 300m of schools and marae, and for the existing nicotine limits for both multi-use and disposables to be reduced to 18-20mg/ml. Ultimately, the only people who should be using e-cigarettes are those who are using them to stop smoking.

Let's work together for better lung health for New Zealanders

Seeing tobacco cigarette use in New Zealand continue to drop is fantastic, and we applaud the government and health agencies for their role in this lung health win, but it cannot be at the expense of the silent uptake of e-cigarette addiction. New Zealand's next government needs to plug the holes in the current health policies to protect New Zealander's lungs both now and into the future.

The TSANZ is available to discuss with you what the evidence shows and how we can support the next government in creating sensible public health policy and achieving a smoke free New Zealand. We can be contacted at: advocacy@thoracic.org.au.

The TSANZ thank you again for your commitment to the lung health of all New Zealanders.

Yours sincerely

Professor Anne E Holland
President
Thoracic Society of Australia and New Zealand