



## PHILIPPINE PEDIATRIC SOCIETY UPDATED POSITION STATEMENT ON RAISING EXCISE TAX ON ENDS/ENNDS

September 12,2019

The Philippine Pediatric Society ( PPS) **strongly supports** raising further the excise tax on ENDS/ ENNDS (Electronic Nicotine Delivery System/Electronic Non Nicotine Delivery System) in line with the PPS mission to help build and safeguard an environment that will ensure the Filipino Child's safety and optimal development.

This move is also in support to raise the much needed funds of the Department of Health's Universal Health Care( UHC) program .

The unregulated proliferation of all forms of e-cigarettes in the market ( vape shops, mall kiosks, convenience stores and online in full view of our children, teens and young adults ) is alarming . It is very clear that the e-cigarette industry has enticed our youth through their false claim as 95% harmless than cigarettes.

**The following are the industry's unsupported claims.**

1. *It is "safer than cigarettes"*. **FALSE.**

1.1. **NASEM** (National Academy of Science Engineering and Medicine) in its report in January 23, 2018 has shown conclusive evidence that E-cigarette use increases airborne concentrations of particulate matter and nicotine in indoor environments. Hence, there is truth on the health harms of second hand and third hand aerosol from e-cigarettes.

1.2. To date, September 12,2019 , there are 380 confirmed cases from 36 states , with 6 ( six) confirmed deaths reported and being investigated in the USA by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) of severe lung disease across all ages whose common denominator is the regular use of e-cigarettes.

1.3. Thus, CDC have warned the public while the investigation is ongoing, consider not using e-cigarette products. And regardless of the ongoing investigation , the teens ,young adults, pregnant women and non-smokers should not use e-cigarette products.

1.4. This September 11,2019, CDC media statement warns that any tobacco product use, including e-cigarettes, is unsafe for youth. Nicotine can harm the developing adolescent brain. We must do everything we can to reduce the use of e-cigarettes among middle and high school students.

2. *It helps smokers quit tobacco.* **FALSE.**

2.1. The 2015 Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS) among Filipino students 10-15 years old, has shown **42.7%** of students have ever heard of electronic cigarettes and **11.7%** of these students ever tried or experimented e-cigarettes.

2.2. We can only surmise that this 2019, the number of youths that have been attracted and are using these harmful devices have increased significantly due to marketing & unchecked sales to minors and the proliferation of numerous kid attractive flavors and packaging .

2.3. Young e-cigarette users have 2x the chance to engage in regular smoking after a year. This is supported by the **PATH** (Population Assessment of Tobacco and Health) **Study** of 2013-2015 . Results showed that any use of electronic cigarettes in one year among 10,384 youths ages 12-17 years doubled the chance of cigarette initiation within a year.

We, in the Philippine Pediatric Society, believe that we need to protect our children and young adults against the health harms and threat of nicotine addiction through e-cigarettes.

The young brain specifically the prefrontal cortex responsible for executive function (impulse control, behavior, emotions and higher learning matures by age 25) is significantly affected by early and repeated exposure to nicotine. Nicotine impairs maximum development of their brain, making them vulnerable to engage in deleterious habits which threaten their health and more so, making them at risk to try other dangerous substances.

Adolescents are price sensitive, raising the excise tax on these products will make ENDS/ENNDS prohibitive to them and somehow decrease their chance to engage in vaping.

We cannot allow our children and our youth to be exposed to the harmful effects of e-cigarettes. In the US, they have reported the health hazards of e-cigarettes in the young population i.e. vape induced lung injuries, seizure, early onset cardiovascular diseases, poisoning and accidental explosions. The same scenario may happen in our country, and these health problems in the young due to e-cigarettes will add up to the burden of health care in our country.

While it provides taxes, e-cigarettes are taxed lower than cigarettes by the 17th Congress.

We, the Philippine Pediatric Society supports this call to raise further the excise tax on ENDS/ENNDS for health and economic reasons as stated above.

Signed

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