

November 21, 2019

Honourable Patty Hajdu  
Minister of Health, Canada  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6  
Sent via email: [patty.hajdu@parl.gc.ca](mailto:patty.hajdu@parl.gc.ca)

Honourable Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier  
Minister of Health, Ontario  
Hepburn Block 10th Floor 80 Grosvenor Street Toronto,  
ON M7A 1E9  
Sent via email: [christine.elliott@pc.ola.org](mailto:christine.elliott@pc.ola.org)

Dear Minister Hajdu/Minister Elliott:

The Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit would like to commend the Ontario Government on the decision to prohibit the promotion of vapour products in convenience stores and gas stations as of January 1, 2020. However, we believe that further steps are necessary to protect our youth and prevent the continued rise in vapour product use in youth and other vulnerable populations.

Vaping has been rapidly increasing in our youth, with a 74% increase in vaping among Canadian youth aged 16-19 reported from 2017 to 2018<sup>1</sup>. While vaping products have been regarded as safer than combustible tobacco cigarettes, recent reports of severe pulmonary illness associated with vaping in the United States and Canada have given rise to concerns about the use of vaping products, especially among youth. Most vaping products contain nicotine at varying levels. This is concerning as children and youth may become dependent on nicotine more rapidly than adults leading to addiction and physical dependence<sup>2</sup>. Research has demonstrated that youth are especially susceptible to the negative effects of nicotine, as it can alter their brain development and can affect memory and concentration.<sup>2,3</sup> There are thousands of flavours of e-liquids available, including candy and fruit flavoured varieties that are greatly appealing to youth, and there is a strong body of evidence to support that flavours attract youth to e-cigarette use where research concludes that flavour influences youth to try and buy e-cigarettes and the appeal of ads promoting flavours is linked to uptake of vaping by youth<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Hammond, D., Reid, J.L., Rynard, V.L., Fong, G.T., Gummings, K.M., McNeill, A., & O'Conner, R. (2019). Prevalence of vaping and smoking among adolescents in Canada, England, and the United States: repeat national cross-sectional surveys. *BJM*, 365, I2219.

<sup>2</sup> Health Canada. (2019-02-04). Vaping: Get the Facts. Retrieved November 2019 from: [tobacco/vaping/risks.html?utm\\_source=google&utm\\_medium=cpc\\_en&utm\\_content=risks\\_2&utm\\_campaign=vapingprevention2019&utm\\_term=%2Bvape](https://www.hkpr.on.ca/tobacco/vaping/risks.html?utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc_en&utm_content=risks_2&utm_campaign=vapingprevention2019&utm_term=%2Bvape)

<sup>3</sup> England, L.J., Bunnell, R.E., Pechacek, T.F., Tong, V.T. and McAfee, T.A., 2015. Nicotine and the developing human: a neglected element in the electronic cigarette debate. *American journal of preventive medicine*, 49(2), pp.286-293.

<sup>4</sup> Vasiljevic M, Petrescu DC, Marteau TM. Impact of advertisements promoting candy-like flavoured e-cigarettes on appeal of tobacco smoking among children: an experimental study, *Tobacco Control*, 2016;25(e2):e107-e112.

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## PROTECTION · PROMOTION · PREVENTION

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At its meeting held on November 21, 2019, the Board of Health for the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit approved a motion to write to you to request more stringent vaping regulations, similar to those regulating tobacco products, to address the rise in vapour product use in youth and other vulnerable populations.

These recommended regulations include:

- Require a ban on flavoured e-cigarettes to help prevent the further uptake of vaping by youth.
- Restrict the nicotine concentration in all vaping products.
- Require health and toxicity warnings on all vapour products.
- Require mandatory testing and reporting for vapour products.
- Require standardized and tamper proof packaging on all vapour products.
- Require an age of 21 years for tobacco, vaping and cannabis sales.
- Develop a robust and sustainable monitoring and surveillance strategy to ensure compliance.
- Revise the Federal *Tobacco and Vaping Products Act* (TVPA) to ban display, promotion and advertising, mirroring the restrictions on tobacco in the TVPA.

Thank you for your attention to this very important matter for the protection of the health of our youth.

Sincerely

BOARD OF HEALTH FOR THE HALIBURTON, KAWARTHA,  
PINE RIDGE DISTRICT HEALTH UNIT



Doug Elmslie, Chair, Board of Health

DE/lm

Cc (via email): The Hon. Doug Ford, Premier  
Jamie Schmale, MP, Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock  
Philip Lawrence, MP, Northumberland-Peterborough South  
The Hon. Laurie Scott, MPP Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock  
David Piccini, MPP Northumberland-Peterborough South  
Dr. David Williams, Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health  
Dr. Paul Roumeliotis, Chair, Council of Medical Officers of Health  
Ontario Boards of Health  
Loretta Ryan, Association of Local Public Health Agencies