



The Hon. Mark Butler MP
Minister for Health and Aged Care

TAKING ACTION ON SMOKING AND VAPING

The Albanese Government is taking strong action to reduce smoking and stamp out vaping – particularly among young Australians – through stronger legislation, enforcement, education and support.

The 2023–24 Budget will include \$737 million to fund a number of measures to protect Australians against the harm caused by tobacco and vaping products.

These measures complement the development of new proposed national tobacco control legislation first announced by the Government in November 2022.

Following public consultation led by the Therapeutic Goods Administration in December 2022, the Government is proposing stronger regulation and enforcement of all e-cigarettes, including new controls on their importation, contents and packaging.

The Government will work with states and territories to stamp out the growing black market in illegal vaping, including to:

- Stop the import of non-prescription vapes;
- Increase the minimum quality standards for vapes including by restricting flavours, colours, and other ingredients;
- Require pharmaceutical-like packaging;
- Reduce the allowed nicotine concentrations and volumes; and
- Ban all single use, disposable vapes.

The Government will also work with states and territories to close down the sale of vapes in retail settings, ending vape sales in convenience stores and other retail settings, while also making it easier to get a prescription for legitimate therapeutic use.

The Budget will include \$63m for a public health information campaign to discourage Australians from taking up vaping and smoking and encourage more people to quit.

There will be \$30m invested in support programs to help Australians quit, including through enhanced nicotine cessation education and training among health practitioners.

As governments at all levels work to stamp out the growing black market in illegal vaping products, measures will also be needed to prevent young people from trading their vapes for cigarettes.

The 2023-24 Budget will include measures to reduce the prevalence of smoking, alongside additional support to improve the health of current and former smokers.

Tax on tobacco will be increased by 5 per cent per year for 3 years in addition to normal indexation. The Government will also align the tax treatment of loose-leaf tobacco products (such as roll-your-own tobacco) with the manufactured stick excise rate to ensure these products are taxed equally.

Both of these changes will reduce the affordability of tobacco, which is consistent with the priorities of the National Tobacco Strategy 2023-2030 (the Strategy), which the Australian Government [has released today](#).

The Strategy is a new national framework, which commits to reducing daily smoking prevalence to below 10 per cent by 2025 and to 5 per cent or less by 2030 and prioritises tackling smoking in First Nations communities.

Together, these changes will raise an additional \$3.3 billion over the coming 4 years, including \$290 million of GST payments to the states and territories, helping to support our health system, and the health of current and former smokers and vapers.

\$264m will be invested in a new national lung cancer screening program that is predicted to prevent 4,080 deaths from lung cancer.

At risk Australians will be able to get a lung scan every two years, [as recommended by](#) the independent Medical Services Advisory Committee.

Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death in Australia, and First Nations communities carry a much higher burden of both smoking and cancer, such that cancer is now the leading cause of disease-related death for First Nations people.

\$239m will be invested to ensure mainstream cancer care services are culturally safe and accessible to First Nations people, and help build the capacity and capability of the Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services sector to support cancer care needs on the ground.

The successful Tackling Indigenous Smoking (TIS) program will be extended and also widened (\$141m) to reduce both vaping and smoking among First Nations people.

These measures will help address the significant threat to public health caused by cigarettes and vaping, and maintain Australia's hard-fought success in tobacco control.

Quotes attributable to Minister Butler:

"Young people who vape are three times as likely to take up smoking. So is it any wonder that under 25s are the only cohort in the community currently recording an increase in smoking rates?"

"Vaping is creating a whole new generation of nicotine dependency in our community. It poses a major threat to Australia's success in tobacco control and the Albanese Government is not going to stand by and let this happen."

"Vaping was sold to governments and communities around the world as a therapeutic product to help long-term smokers quit. It was not sold as a recreational product - especially not one targeted to our kids but that is what it has become."

"After nine years of delay and inaction by the former government, the gains of Labor's world-leading plain packaging reforms have been squandered."

"Australia needs to reclaim its position as a world leader on tobacco control."

"These reform measures will help protect the health of Australians, while reducing the pressure on our health system and critically it will help to achieve a reduction in smoking rates to 5 per cent or less by 2030."

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