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**Media release**

**Global anti-smoking experts highlight e-cigarette opportunities**

A new report from global anti-smoking experts is warning that the advantages of e-cigarettes should not be dismissed.

The report is published today by ASH NZ and End Smoking New Zealand by veteran anti-smoking campaigners, including global and New Zealand experts.

The authors are cautioning the Government to not be heavy-handed with regulation of the products. Whilst the report highlights the importance of protecting youth, the authors recommend that this can be achieved whilst assisting smokers to quit smoking and transition to the much less harmful e-cigarette option. They underline that a range of flavours are important to the smokefree proposition of e-cigarettes.

“We cannot afford to privilege cigarette smoking above these products, and emerging products. Excessive regulation will actually harm smokers, including young people,” says ASH’s Professor Robert Beaglehole.

Lawmakers are urged to control rather than prohibit the advertising of low-risk products.

“Advertising can encourage existing smokers to make the switch, and a ban in this area would be protectionism for existing smoked tobacco,” says author, former ASH UK Director Clive Bates.

Another author, Oncologist, Dr George Laking suggests a key distinction is made between ‘smoked’ and ‘smokefree’ products.

“Smokefree tobacco and nicotine products can displace smoking. Smoking combustible tobacco has the greatest of health burdens, so the point here is to reduce this, regardless of whether a product contains or doesn’t contain tobacco,” says Dr Laking.

Canadian law professor David Sweanor has worked on tobacco control policies since the 1980s and says that like many businesses that have been disrupted and diminished, the tobacco industry will be disrupted by new technologies such as e-cigarettes.

“Regulation is needed, but not heavy-handed regulation. Set an ability to control ingredients, flavours, and descriptions, but don’t ban flavours outright – not unless you want to ban thousands of smokers from shifting off tobacco,” says Professor Sweanor.

Co-author Ben Youdan urges Parliamentarians not to overreact and “make the more dangerous of the choices, the easier to obtain.”

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**Notes to editors:**

The report ‘A Surge Strategy for Smokefree Aotearoa 2025’ is available [HERE](#)

A summary is available [HERE](#)

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Prof Robert Beaglehole and Dr George Laking are available for interviews.