

Directorate-General for Personnel
Directorate for HR Support and Social Services
Medical Service, Brussels
The Head of Unit

Brussels, 16th December 2019

NOTE TO THE ATTENTION OF [REDACTED]
Head of Unit
Secretariat of the Quaestors

Subject: Preliminary advice of the medical service on the ban of electronic cigarettes and vaping in the buildings of the European Parliament, as requested by the Secretariat of the Quaestors

At its meeting of 23 March 2011, the Bureau adopted a set of rules laying down a ban on tobacco smoking on Parliament's premises, with the exception of certain specially designated areas (smoking booths with special ventilation). Offices and official cars are included in the smoke-free zone.

Smoke bans aim to guarantee a smoke-free work environment and eliminate the risks of passive smoking.

Since the arrival of new **electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS)** (electronic cigarettes, vaping devices, novel tobacco products etc), the intranet site on the no-smoking rule specifies that the use of electronic cigarettes is also banned. ([link](#))

These new alternatives (regulated under the Directive 2014/40/EU) do not produce smoke (from combustion) but they produce aerosols. They are promoted as less dangerous alternatives to classical tobacco products but **cannot be considered safe**. Emerging risks, including the potentially fatal EVALI (e-cigarette or vaping product use-associated lung injury) are currently being investigated.

Much like smoke, these aerosols are inhaled not only by the direct user but also by bystanders. This is known as **second-hand aerosol (SHA) exposure**.

Recent studies are highlighting that the passive SHA exposure from electronic cigarettes and vaping devices may represent a significant risk factor for passive vapers.

SHA contains a number of **toxic components**, including propylene glycol, glycerol, formaldehyde, acetaldehyde, nicotine, polyaromatic hydrocarbons, volatile organic compounds (VOC), tobacco specific nitrosamines, acrolein, and metals such as copper, cadmium, nickel and lead. Moreover, SHA contains high concentration of **nano-particles** with high penetration capacity and delivering action of chemicals/contaminants in the deepest regions of the human lungs.

In line with the 2019 recommendations of the World Health Organization (WHO), the medical service recommends that ENDS be explicitly banned in all smoke-free environments, in order to minimize the risk to bystanders and to avoid undermining the enforcement of smoke-free regulations. This ban should be extended to include all recreational vaping systems (whether they contain nicotine or not).

As requested, we will prepare a presentation for the 14/1/2020 meeting of the Quaestors and will provide you with the relevant references.



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