

# Long term smoking relapse prevention

## Trajectories of e-cigarette use for harm reduction

---

**Dr Caitlin Notley**

**No financial or other conflicts of interest**



# Background

---

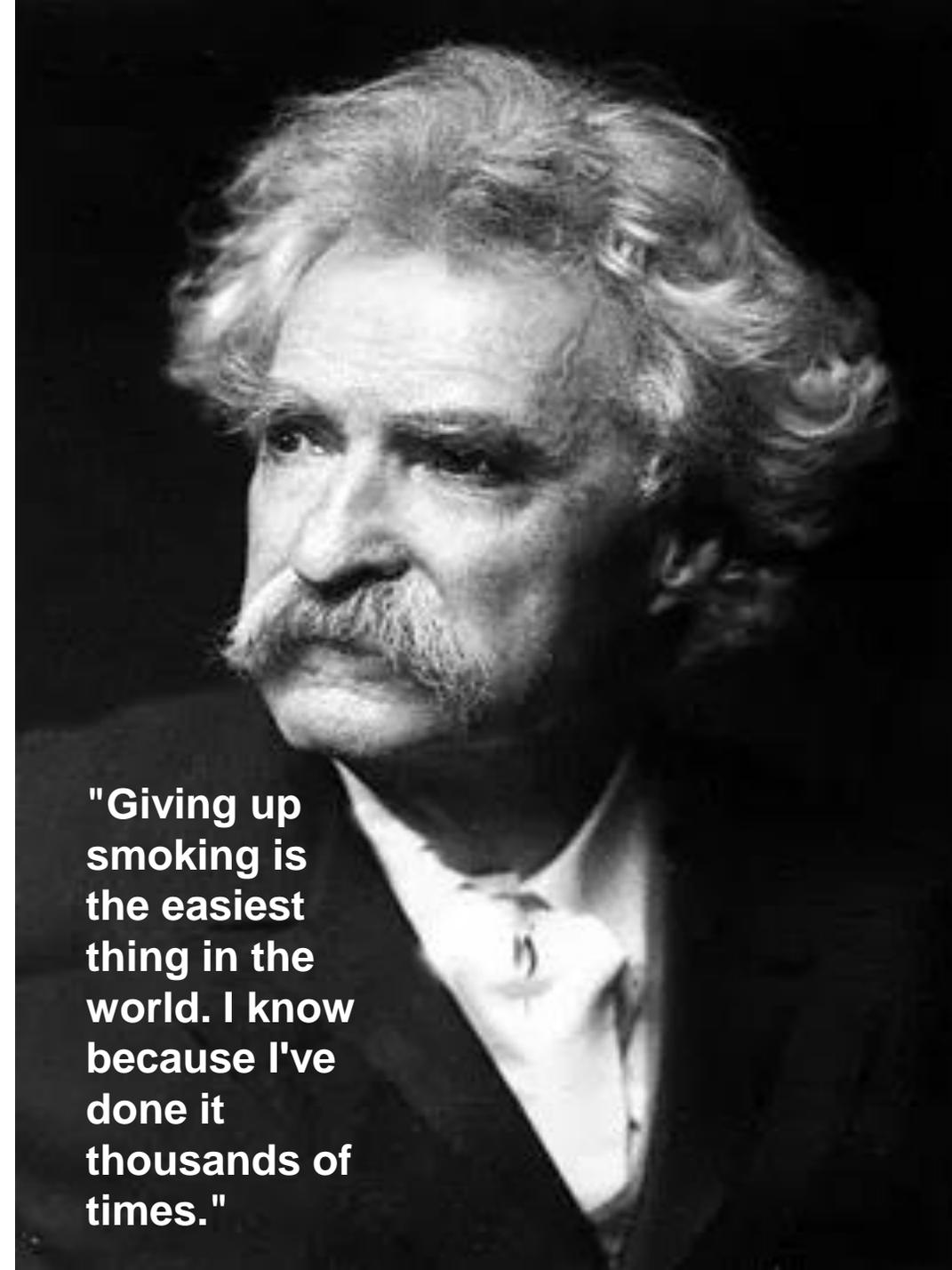
**Quitting smoking**

**Relapse to smoking**

**Relapse prevention interventions = not effective**

**Cessation methods:**

- ✓ Physical
- ✓ Psychological
- ✗ Social
- ✗ Identity
- ✗ Pleasure
- ✗ Feeling
- ✗ Symbolic meaning



**"Giving up smoking is the easiest thing in the world. I know because I've done it thousands of times."**

# RELAPSE AS REGAINING SOCIAL IDENTITY?

---

“Smoking relapse is conceptualized as a situated rational response to a “disruption” in individual narrative identity formation, and an attempt to recover a lost social identity.”

## E-cigarettes provide an alternative identity?

A symbolic object of consumption that allows adjustment to the disruption of quitting smoking



Journal of Substance Use >  
Journal of Substance Use >  
Volume 23, 2018 - Issue 6

Enter keywords, authors, DOI, ORCID

821 Views

1 CrossRef citations to date

249 Altmetric

Articles

### Redefining smoking relapse as recovered social identity – secondary qualitative analysis of relapse narratives

Caitlin Notley & Rory Collins

Pages 660-666 | Received 30 Dec 2017, Accepted 20 May 2018, Published online: 02 Jul 2018

Download citation | <https://doi.org/10.1080/14659891.2018.1489009> | Check for updates

# Real world experiences of using e-cigarettes for avoiding relapse to smoking - the ECtra Study

## Potential of e-cigarettes for relapse prevention?

- In-depth participant perspectives on patterns of e-cigarette use over time in the context of smoking cessation or relapse.
- Qualitative study
- Adverts, snowballing
- Interviews
- Additional online interview.
- Photo elicitation to explore patterns of use
- Thematic analysis
- Vape shop observations

# ECtra



**UEA** | Norwich  
University of East Anglia | Medical  
School

 **CANCER  
RESEARCH  
UK**



# Findings

## Qualitative interview study

*“they’re the perfect replication of smoking, nothing else gives you that, and if you’re like me, and there is a lot of people like me enjoy smoking, the action of it, the feel of it, it becomes, it’s important to you isn’t it? that feeling, and you enjoy it”*

E-Cigarettes potentially effective for long term relapse prevention as attend to physical, psychological, social and identity related needs of ex-smokers

ECtra



The screenshot shows the article page for 'The unique contribution of e-cigarettes for tobacco harm reduction in supporting smoking relapse prevention' in the Harm Reduction Journal. The page includes a navigation menu, a table of contents, and the article's title and authors.

Harm Reduction Journal

Home About Articles Submission Guidelines

Abstract Background Methods Results Discussion Conclusions Declarations References

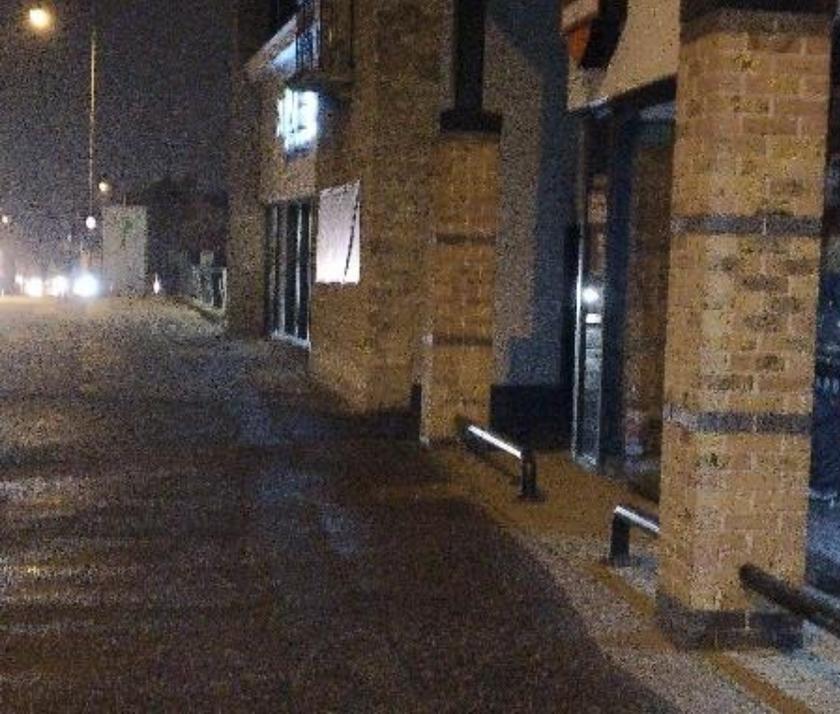
Research | Open Access

### The unique contribution of e-cigarettes for tobacco harm reduction in supporting smoking relapse prevention

Caitlin Notley, Emma Ward, Lynne Dawkins and Richard Holland

Harm Reduction Journal 2018 15:31  
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12954-018-0237-7> © The Author(s) 2018  
Received: 14 May 2018 | Accepted: 22 May 2018 | Published: 20 June 2018

# Findings – photo elicitation





# Findings – vape shops observational study



International Journal of  
*Environmental Research  
and Public Health*



[Int J Environ Res Public Health](#). 2018 Feb; 15(2): 297.  
Published online 2018 Feb 9. doi: [10.3390/ijerph15020297](https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph15020297)

PMCID: PMC5858366  
PMID: [29425117](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29425117/)

## A Qualitative Exploration of the Role of Vape Shop Environments in Supporting Smoking Abstinence

[Emma Ward](#),<sup>1\*</sup> [Sharon Cox](#),<sup>2</sup> [Lynne Dawkins](#),<sup>2</sup> [Sarah Jakes](#),<sup>3</sup> [Richard Holland](#),<sup>4</sup> and [Caitlin Notley](#)<sup>1</sup>

Vape shops are an easy to access, non-medicalised 'expert by experience' source of advice and support. Different shops appeal to different smokers and may encourage unmotivated quitters to quit.



Norwich  
Medical  
School

# Findings – smoking lapses

## No lapse

- No desire
- Vaping preference
- Disgust anticipation
- *“I feel physically sick...I just can't stand to be around it (cigarette smoking), never mind trying to consider putting it to my mouth and inhaling it, it's that level of detest”*

## Past lapse

- Curiosity
- Social context / alcohol / stress
- Device failure / lack of access
- Perceived control
- Negative reinforcement – affirming quit
- *“I took two drags and hated it”*

## Current lapse (permissive)

- Stress cues: justified
- Context specific lapse / identity
- Perceived control
- Guilt free
- Not considered lapse / minimising
- *“It's very easy for someone that does vape to think, well you know, 'I can smoke tonight'...and then go back to vaping the next day”*



Drug and Alcohol REVIEW APSAD

Original Paper | Open Access | CC BY

### Vaping as an alternative to smoking relapse following brief lapse

Caitlin Notley, Emma Ward, Lynne Dawkins, Richard Holland, Sarah Jakes

First published: 28 November 2018 | <https://doi.org/10.1111/dar.12876> | Citations: 4

Caitlin Notley PhD, Senior Lecturer in Mental Health, Emma Ward PhD, Senior Research Associate, Lynne Dawkins PhD, Associate Professor, Richard Holland PhD, Professor, Sarah Jakes advocacy co-author.

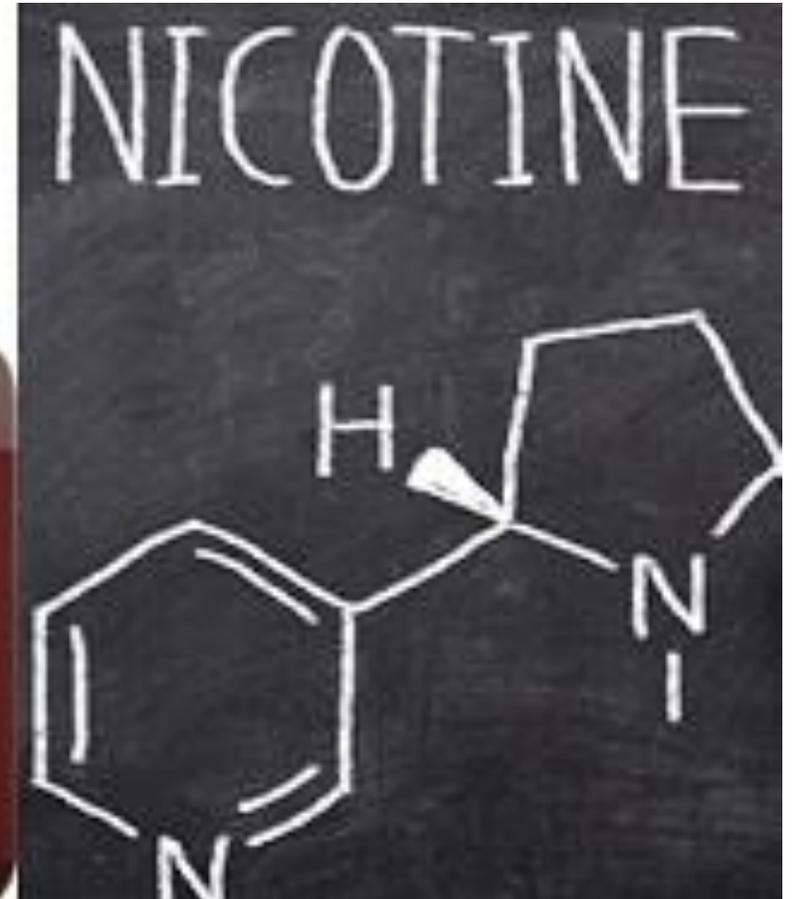
SECTIONS

PDF TOOLS SHARE

# CRITIQUE

---

- **Cross-sectional, observational data**
- **Dual use problematic as still using tobacco? Is this a trajectory towards continuing to use tobacco (bad) or moving towards cessation (good)**
- **Do people relapse long term anyway?**
- **Is it a problem continuing to use nicotine long-term by vaping?**



# E-Cigarette Trajectories longitudinal study

## **Design:**

Follow up qualitative interviews with original sample, 12 months on

Follow up online feedback from original online sample, 12 months on

Patterns of use and changes

Devices, e-liquids, flavours, strengths

Impact and awareness of regulatory environment (EU TPD)

## **Key findings (quantitative data)**

Association between starting device and relapse status

Association between starting nicotine strength and relapse status

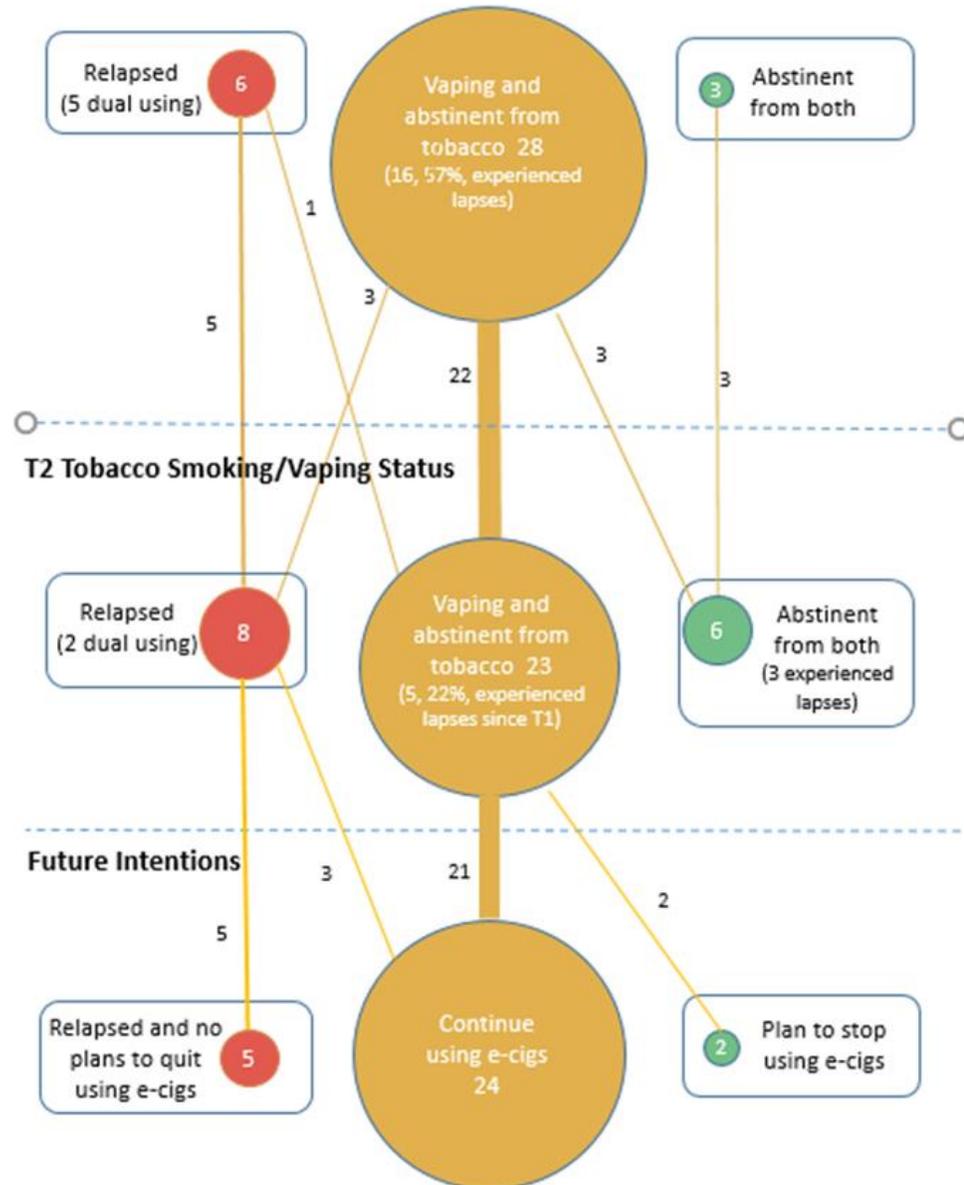
Patterns of changing flavours over time

Patterns of changing device type over time

Conclusions: naturalistic user driven patterns of use are supportive of long term relapse prevention

# E-Cigarette Trajectories longitudinal study

## T1 Tobacco Smoking/Vaping Status



## Key findings (qualitative data)

- Patterns of use remained stable:
- Maintainer group
- Abstainer group
- Relapsed group
- Trend towards reduced nicotine e liquid
- Trend towards smoking abstinence for previous dual users suggesting a long term trajectory of 'sliding' towards full cessation

# CONCLUSIONS

- E cigs appear to be uniquely supportive as a means of supporting sustained abstinence from tobacco smoking (relapse prevention)
- Attend to physical, psychological, social, identity and user driven aspects of previous smoking addiction, including *pleasure* and *emotion/feeling*
- Patterns of behaviour once switched appear stable, but trend towards different devices and flavours, and reduced nicotine strength
- Importance of social support to continue to vape – social group, trouble shoot problems, give advice, try new flavours to maintain interest
- Implies acceptance from both users and wider societal context of ongoing use of nicotine through vaping as a reduced harm alternative to smoking

# CONCERNS

- **Public perceptions of harm of nicotine**
- **Media mis-reporting of potential harm of regulated e-cigarette use for smoking cessation**
- **Bans on flavours**
- **Regulatory context impacts behaviour**
- **Felt need to reduce nicotine and/or stop vaping entirely**
- **Could result in increased relapse to tobacco smoking?**

# THANK YOU

---

**Dr Caitlin Notley**

