**should e-cigarette displays be banned at tills? Teenagers are 'more likely to try the devices if they're readily available'**

* **Young people who try e-cigarettes are more likely to use them again**
* **Those who previously smoked cigarettes are more likely to use devices**
* **First study to look at relationship between teenagers' recollection of the devices at the point of sale in shops and their intention and use of them**
* **Displaying devices at point of sale near tills increases the likelihood that teenagers will use them, experts have warned**

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Teenagers who see e-cigarettes on display in their local stores are more likely to try the devices, experts have warned.

They found young people who have tried e-cigarettes in the past were more likely to intend to use them again.

And those who had previously smoked tobacco were more inclined to turn to the electronic alternatives.

Meanwhile their non-smoking peers were much less likely to try e-cigarettes or show intent to do so in the future, a new study shows.

Most adolescents taking part in the research by a team at the University of Stirling, had only tried the devices once or twice and were not regular users.

Their research is the first to examine the relationship between teenagers' recollection of e-cigarette displays at point of sale, and their self-reported past use and future intention to use the devices.

It was previously known that exposure to cigarettes at the point of sale influences smoking behaviour and intentions in young people.

Furthermore increased availability of cigarettes, for example through a high number of shops selling tobacco near a person's home, is linked to higher tendency to smoke and starting smoking.

However, to date there has been no evidence examining the link between the display of e-cigarettes at the point of sale in shops, and their use in young people.

To look at the potential relationship, researchers conducted a survey in four high schools in Scotland, involving 3,808 students between 11 and 18 years of age.

The data collected was part of an ongoing six-year study designed to assess the impact of Scottish legislation banning tobacco point of sale displays on young people's smoking behaviour and their attitudes towards smoking.

Additional information on e-cigarette advertising exposure, e-cigarette use and smoking status was gathered through a school-based survey conducted in early 2015.

Respondents were asked whether they had heard of e-cigarettes, whether they had ever used them, and whether they intended to try them in the next six months.

They were also asked if they had ever smoked cigarettes and if they intended to do so in the next year.

Researchers noted a strong link between recognising e-cigarette displays at the point of sale and the use of the devices, and intention to use them in future.

However, the study used a cross-sectional design and so no causal relationship between point of sale recall and e-cigarette use or intention to use could be established.

Therefore, it is unclear whether young people who plan to try e-cigarettes do so because they notice e-cigarettes at POS or whether they notice e-cigarettes because they intend to try them in the future.

The sample used in this study was not randomly selected and is not necessarily representative of the Scottish population, and there was a 13 per cent non-response rate to the survey which relied on recall and self-reporting.

The researchers note that collection of additional longitudinal data is needed to establish causality.

Catherine Best, the corresponding author, said: 'Given that our study found an association between point of sale exposure to e-cigarettes and both their use and intention to use in young people, policy makers in the EU and elsewhere need to consider very carefully how to balance the promotion of e-cigarettes to adult smokers as an aid to help them quit, while at the same time minimizing their uptake by young people.'

As of May 20, EU member states will be required to have legislation that restricts the advertising of e-cigarettes.

Sally Haw, lead author of the study, said: 'We have seen considerable investment in e-cigarette advertising by the tobacco industry.

'While these new restrictions on e-cigarette advertising through broadcast and print media, sponsorship and product placement are very much welcomed, they are more limited than those that apply to tobacco advertising.

'However, individual jurisdictions will be able to extend their restrictions to include e-cigarette advertising on bill boards and at point of sale. This requires careful consideration.'

The study is published in the open access journal BMC Public Health.

Read more: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-3538807/Should-e-cigarette-displays-banned-tills-Teenagers-likely-try-devices-advertised.html#ixzz4Bk5ozFnv>   
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