



Kansas Public Health Association

- Promoting and Improving Population Health in Kansas

Advancing Health through Tobacco and Nicotine Policies

The Issue:

Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death and disease in the United States. While significant progress has been made over the last 50 years to reduce tobacco use, it remains a serious health issue. In Kansas, 20 percent of adults and 10 percent of high school students currently smoke cigarettes. Smoking related annual health care costs are an estimated \$1.12 billion. Non-smokers bear much of this cost, through higher insurance premiums and taxes for costly health services for KanCare and Medicare beneficiaries.

The rising popularity of electronic cigarettes is deeply concerning to public health professionals. In 2014, According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, nearly 2.5 million middle and high school students reported using e-cigarettes in the last month. Put another way, 1 in 7 high school students are using these products. E-cigarettes are fairly new to the market and therefore do not have sufficient clinical research to prove their harm; however, early information and research on the harms of using other nicotine-based products indicate they are not safe, especially for children, adolescents and pregnant women. Even less is known about the effects of second-hand emissions of e-cigarettes on the public's health. It is critical that smoke-free indoor air laws expand to include e-cigarettes while research moves forward.

Doing so will ensure that a new generation does not succumb to a lifetime of harmful addiction, disease, and untimely death.

Effective tobacco control occurs when a concerted effort is made to establish and financially maintain comprehensive tobacco prevention and control initiatives. The Association supports

- Further increases in excise taxes on all tobacco products, including e-cigarettes,
- Prohibiting smoking in all public places, including parks and outdoor public gathering places,
- Preventing youth tobacco use by raising the minimum purchasing and consumption age to 21,
- Supporting efforts to fund smoking cessation programs, and
- Maintaining or strengthening Indoor Clean Air Act regulations which includes expanding policies to include e-cigarettes.

2017 Advocacy Priorities:

Tobacco 21: Support local efforts across the state to raise the legal age to purchase tobacco, flavored liquid nicotine and electronic cigarettes from 18 to 21.

Clean Indoor Air: Support efforts to expand local policies and the statewide Kansas Indoor Clean Air Act to include e-cigarettes. Amendments must not weaken current state law.

Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS): Support state laws prohibiting the sale of flavored products and restrict the sales and marketing of e-cigarettes to youth.

Cost of Tobacco Products: Support further increases in excise taxes on all tobacco products, including e-cigarettes.