Indiana Tobacco Use Prevention and Cessation Executive Board Statement regarding Electronic Cigarettes

Several electronic cigarettes, or e-cigarettes, are now in the marketplace in Indiana and across the United States. Electronic (or e-) cigarettes are devices which claim contain no tobacco, however mimic cigarettes and come in a variety of flavors, many that may be appealing to children and young adults. Most e-cigarettes claim to deliver nicotine; some do not.

While e-cigarettes may be viewed by some as a potentially less dangerous alternative to cigarettes or a potential smoking cessation aide, at this time there is no publicly available independent research on the important question of safety or efficacy. Electronic cigarettes have not been approved as safe by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

There are numerous methods for treating tobacco use addiction that have been thoroughly researched and are endorsed by health care professionals. Specifically, the US Public Health Service issued the 2008 Guideline on Treating Tobacco Use Addiction. An electronic cigarette does not constitute an evidence-based approach nor is there current peer reviewed research to suggest that it is a device that should be added as a safe and effective method for treating nicotine addiction.

However, there are seven first line medications that FDA has approved for treating tobacco use addiction. Electronic cigarettes are not one of these first line medications. Consumers need to know e-cigarettes are not an approved quit smoking device. Promotion of these products as a cessation aid without approval from the FDA is prohibited.

Smokers wanting to quit smoking should be directed to see their health care provider for assistance and to call 1-800-QUIT-NOW for sound advice.

Finally, there is concern that e-cigarettes might actually encourage children and teens and young adults to take their first step toward smoking cigarettes, drawn in by the products' novelty and variety of flavors, including strawberry, banana and chocolate.

The Indiana Tobacco Use Prevention and Cessation Executive Board is concerned about the potential health risks and the other claims made by the manufacturers associated with these products. Such concerns can only be addressed by proper evaluation and regulation by the FDA. Therefore, the ITPC Executive Board urges the FDA to review and regulate e-cigarettes pursuant to its jurisdiction over non-tobacco nicotine products. Unless and until the FDA determines that e-cigarettes are safe and effective, they should be taken off the market.

Approved Indiana Tobacco Use Prevention and Cessation Executive Board
May 21, 2009