

New rules will help prevent e-cigarette advertisements targeting children

October 13 2014



From 10th November, new rules published by the Committees of Advertising Practice (CAP) will prevent e-cigarettes advertisements targeting non-smokers including children.

The new regulations, established specifically for [e-cigarettes](#), will allow them to be shown on TV adverts for the first time. But the campaigns will be banned from attempting to tap into youth culture or promoting any link with [tobacco products](#).

Ads must not encourage non-smokers to use e-cigarettes, must make clear that the product is an e-cigarette and not a tobacco product and must not contain anything that could be associated in the audience's mind with a tobacco brand, CAP said.

Advertisers must not claim that e-cigarettes are safer or healthier than smoking tobacco unless they obtain authorisation from the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency.

CAP said the rules placed an emphasis on the protection of young people, and anyone appearing in them must not be, or appear to be, under 25.

Cancer Research UK's director of cancer prevention, Alison Cox stressed that rules like these are required to stop advertising appealing to people who don't smoke, especially [children](#).

"E-cigarettes have a lot of potential to help people quit but we need to have rules like these to prevent them from appealing to non-smokers, particularly children," she said.

"There have been many examples of irresponsible marketing and evidence shows that some adverts appeal to kids, making e-cigarettes appear as the cool 'must have' product. E-cigarettes are controversial but we know very few children are using them at the moment and, overall, smoking rates are continuing to fall."

Ads on TV and radio will be subject to scheduling restrictions to reduce the chance of them being seen or heard by children.

CAP said the recent increase in the popularity and availability of e-cigarettes had seen a significant growth in advertising, and while they had been subject to general rules covering misleading claims, harm,

offence and social responsibility, they had not, until now, been subject to rules specific to the product.

It said the updated rules "harmonised" those concerning broadcast and non-broadcast advertisements and followed a consultation involving policy makers, health professionals, charities and business that took into account the potential of e-cigarettes to re-normalise smoking, as well as the case being made for their public health benefits.

CAP said it would closely monitor the effect of the rules and conduct a formal review after 12 months.

CAP director Shahriar Coupal said: "We've moved quickly to put in place appropriate and clear regulation around e-cigarette advertising.

"While the debate about e-cigarettes continues, our commitment is to make sure they are advertised in a responsible way and that children are protected."

The charity Ash (Action on Smoking and Health) said the new rules were "sensible and comprehensive", but said it was disappointed that celebrity endorsement and free samples had not been banned.

Ash chief executive Deborah Arnott said: "We welcome the new rules governing the advertising of electronic cigarettes which should bring clarity to the regulatory process and ensure that advertising will in future be in the best interests of public health.

"We are also pleased that in recognition of the rapid evolution of this market there will be a further review of the rules after 12 months."

Provided by Cancer Research UK

Citation: New rules will help prevent e-cigarette advertisements targeting children (2014, October 13) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2014-10-e-cigarette-advertisements-children.html>

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