

Half of smokers using Liverpool Stop Smoking Services used e-cigs

November 3 2014

Over half the smokers using the Liverpool Stop Smoking Service have tried electronic cigarettes (51.3 per cent). Of these, nearly half had used them within the past month and are considered current users (45.5 per cent).

The data – presented at the National Cancer Research Institute (NCRI) Cancer Conference in Liverpool today (Tuesday) – also highlights that [smokers](#) are more likely to try [e-cigarettes](#) if they feel more confident that the products are safer than tobacco [smoking](#).

Researchers from the University of Liverpool quizzed more than 320 smokers from the Roy Castle FagEnds study to understand the number of people who used e-cigarettes and what smokers thought about the products.

Smokers appear undecided towards e-cigarettes, possibly due to the widely documented uncertainties about safety and effectiveness in helping smokers to successfully break their addiction. Some also viewed using e-cigarettes as an extension of smoking and perceived them as an inferior tool for helping to quit smoking.

Generally e-cigarettes were viewed indifferently. Twenty of the smokers were then interviewed by phone and some of these viewed e-cigarettes negatively. Additionally, some participants were misinformed of or misunderstood the risks associated with e-cigarettes.

Frances Sherratt, lead author from the University of Liverpool, said: "Our results show that [electronic cigarettes](#) are commonly used by smokers wanting to quit and seek help through the Stop Smoking Services. Many smokers also viewed e-cigarettes negatively or indifferently as a way to [stop smoking](#). This study highlights the need for better education regarding e-cigarettes, to enable smokers to make balanced, informed smoking cessation treatment decisions to help them quit."

Paula Chadwick, chief executive of Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation who helped fund the research, said: "While the research suggests that a high proportion of smokers try e-cigarettes as an aid to quitting, it also shows that many recognise their effectiveness is limited compared to more conventional, proven techniques.

"Lingering issues around their safety and long-term health impact also continue to affect public opinion. People are more likely to be successful with the tailored, one-to-one support of a quit smoking professional and this seems to have been understood by the majority of those surveyed."

Dr Karen Kennedy, Director of the NCRI, said: "This research provides an interesting insight into how many, and why, smokers use e-cigarettes. Tobacco is the single biggest cause of preventable [cancer](#) deaths, so understanding how smokers can be better helped in breaking the addiction is extremely valuable in reducing cancer deaths."

More information: Sherratt F. et al, Examining electronic cigarette use within a UK Stop Smoking Service Conference abstract: [conference.ncri.org.uk/abstrac ... /abstracts/A146.html](http://conference.ncri.org.uk/abstrac.../abstracts/A146.html)

Provided by Cancer Research UK

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