

# New data on e-cigarette use among New Zealand adults

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Around one in six New Zealand adults have tried e-cigarettes but only 2 percent are using them currently, a national survey has found.

However, the research led by the Health Promotion Agency and recently published in the scientific journal Addictive Behaviours also found more than half (56.5 percent) of current [smokers](#) had at least tried e-cigarettes.

Paper co-author, Professor Richard Edwards, who is Co-Director of the ASPIRE 2025 Research Group at the University of Otago, Wellington, says daily use is highest among current smokers (3.1 percent) and among people who had quit [smoking](#) in the last year (9.0 percent), but there was no daily use among people who have never smoked.

"The findings from this nationally representative survey of adult New Zealanders give us a snapshot for how the use of e-cigarettes is developing," Professor Edwards explains.

"The information from the survey will help monitor the uptake of e-cigarettes and provide evidence about their impact on smoking. It could also help in the development of interventions aiming to enhance the contribution of e-cigarettes to reducing smoking and its [adverse health effects](#) in Aotearoa."



Professor Richard Edwards. Credit: University of Otago

Professor Edwards says the paper provides information that could inform ongoing debates about the possible positive and negative impacts of e-cigarettes, and their potential role in helping to achieve New Zealand's Smokefree 2025 goal.

"The finding that people who have never smoked are not using these products is reassuring, as is the relatively high use among recent quitters, as this suggests that many smokers are successfully using e-cigarettes to quit.

"However, the substantial difference between the proportion of smokers who have tried e-cigarettes and who are currently using them suggests that more information and advice is needed to support smokers who try to quit smoking with e-cigarettes."

Data came from the Health and Lifestyles Survey—the Health Promotion Agency's biennial face-to-face in-house [survey](#) of New Zealand adults aged 15 years or over, which in 2016 had 3854 participants.

**More information:** Alana Oakly et al. Prevalence of e-cigarette use from a nationally representative sample in New Zealand, *Addictive Behaviors* (2019). [DOI: 10.1016/j.addbeh.2019.06.013](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.addbeh.2019.06.013)

Provided by University of Otago

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