

UK doctors urge government to act over 'vaping epidemic'

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Leading UK doctors urged the government Wednesday to pass legislation to tackle "a vaping epidemic," in particular among young people, by banning disposable e-cigarettes and all flavors apart from

tobacco.

The call came alongside the publication of a British Medical Association (BMA) report which it said was a "blueprint" for the "bold actions needed."

The previous Conservative government unveiled plans earlier this year to eventually phase out smoking, alongside banning disposable e-cigarettes and restricting their flavors and packaging.

The new Labour administration—which swept to power early last month—has revived the [draft legislation](#) but is yet to detail its exact approach.

The BMA report noted that vape use among [children](#) and [young people](#) has increased almost six-fold in the last decade.

It implored the government not to "shy away from taking brave action" in order to "stem the trend."

"There is no denying we are living in a vaping epidemic," Professor David Strain, chair of the BMA's board of science, said in comments accompanying the report's release.

He noted one in 10 ten adults now vape, while calling the six-fold increase in those aged between 11 and 17 who now vape "far more worrying."

"As a doctor, I understand the role vapes can play in helping people to stop smoking, but they have no rightful place in our children and young people's lives," Strain added.

"An industry so obviously targeting children with colors, flavors and

branding, to push a product that can lead to nicotine addiction and potential further harms cannot be allowed to happen any longer."

The report recommends banning all disposable vape and non-tobacco flavor sales, as well as using imagery, coloring and branding on packaging and devices.

That would mirror current restrictions on cigarettes.

The BMA also wants curbs on advertising and marketing, and rules keeping vapes behind retail counters and not on display.

Meanwhile, it is recommending government education campaigns on the dangers of vapes to reduce their appeal, especially among youngsters.

"We are calling on ministers to take bold and brave actions that will make a real difference," Penelope Toff, the BMA's public health medicine committee head, said.

A Department of Health and Social Care spokesperson said marketing vapes to children and young people was "utterly unacceptable."

The spokesperson said planned legislation will outlaw the practice while "regulating [flavors](#), packaging, and changing how and where they are displayed in shops."

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