

Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee
Wednesday 18 June 2025
11th Meeting, 2025 (Session 6)

PE2155: Improve support for people trying to give up e-cigarettes and vaping

Introduction

Petitioner Daniel Taggart

Petition summary Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to improve the support available to people trying to give up e-cigarettes and vapes by expanding access to nicotine replacement therapy and stop smoking medications to include e-cigarette users and vapers.

Webpage <https://petitions.parliament.scot/petitions/PE2155>

1. This is a new petition that was lodged on 7 April 2025.
2. A full summary of this petition and its aims can be found at **Annexe A**.
3. A SPICe briefing has been prepared to inform the Committee's consideration of the petition and can be found at **Annexe B**.
4. Every petition collects signatures while it remains under consideration. At the time of writing, 10 signatures have been received on this petition.
5. The Committee seeks views from the Scottish Government on all new petitions before they are formally considered.
6. The Committee has received a submission from the Scottish Government, which is set out in **Annexe C** of this paper.

Action

7. The Committee is invited to consider what action it wishes to take.

Clerks to the Committee
June 2025

Annexe A: Summary of petition

PE2155: Improve support for people trying to give up e-cigarettes and vaping

Petitioner

Daniel Taggart

Date Lodged

7 April 2025

Petition summary

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to improve the support available to people trying to give up e-cigarettes and vapes by expanding access to nicotine replacement therapy and stop smoking medications to include e-cigarette users and vapers.

Background information

The Scottish Government is keen to introduce an initiative aimed at young people who use e-cigarettes or vapes, this should be extended to EVERYONE who wishes to give these products up.

[There are 7 types of nicotine replacement therapy available, free on the NHS, to people in Scotland who want to give up smoking.](#) However, there is little support or resources available to assist people trying to quit e-cigarettes or vaping. Those giving up have to purchase nicotine patches or other aids such as the "stress stick", which can become quite costly to the individual.

I have personally been a vaper for 13 years and am struggling to achieve my goal of being vape free.

Annexe B: SPICe briefing on PE2155



Brief overview of issues raised by the petition

[PE2155](#) calls on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to improve the support available for individuals trying to quit e-cigarettes and vapes by expanding access to nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) and smoking cessation medications for e-cigarette and vape users. It highlights that while the NHS currently provides various forms of NRT free of charge to those attempting to stop smoking, not all of these options are available to individuals trying to quit e-cigarette use and vaping.

Background

[Quitting vaping and e-cigarette use is similar to quitting smoking](#), as both involve nicotine addiction and can result in withdrawal symptoms. These symptoms may include cravings, irritability, difficulty concentrating, and disrupted sleep. While e-cigarettes and vapes are currently considered lower-risk than traditional tobacco products, [they still pose health concerns, particularly in terms of nicotine addiction and exposure to harmful substances for non-smokers who might otherwise not have been exposed](#). Further research is required to study their long-term health impacts. According to the latest data from the [Scottish Health Survey](#), 12% of adults in Scotland reported using e-cigarettes or vapes in 2023, an increase from 10% in 2022.

In 2023, Public Health Scotland completed a [review of the available smoking cessation services](#). It states that available options include pharmacy and specialist non-pharmacy services, both of which are free of charge. Service users can visit their local pharmacy where a pharmacist will explain the medications available to help them to quit smoking such as patches, nasal sprays or inhalators. Specialist services sit within general practices, community, and acute care. They are more structured and include group sessions facilitated by a trained advisor or one-to-one sessions directly with a trained advisor.

There are currently various products that can be used to help people quit smoking, including:

- Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT)- a medication that provides a low level of nicotine, without the tar, carbon monoxide and other poisonous chemicals present in tobacco smoke. This is administered via skin patches, chewing gum, inhalators, tablets, oral strips, and lozenges and nasal and mouth sprays. These can be used individually or in combination.

- Varenicline- a prescription medication which reduces cravings for and decreases the pleasurable effects of cigarettes and other tobacco products.
- Bupropion- a prescription medication which reduces interest in smoking and reduces nicotine cravings and withdrawal symptoms.

There are several specialist interventions that can be used to support attempts to quit smoking. These include structured multiple sessions that can take the form of one-to-one support, couple/family group-based support, telephone support, or closed or open group support.

[NHS Guidance on Public Health Service](#) for pharmacists and their staff advises that patients who are e-cigarette users should be encouraged to quit tobacco, nicotine, and e-cigarette use entirely and should be able to access licenced smoking cessation products (currently NRT, bupropion or varenicline). However, this guidance cautions that many e-cigarette products contain nicotine which creates issues for determining the correct dosage when switching to NRT, particularly if the patient has struggled to quite e-cigarette use. Additionally, for patients currently using a non-nicotine e-cigarette product, reintroducing nicotine through NRT would be inappropriate. For these patients, the guidance recommends referral to non-pharmacy specialist smoking cessation services.

Scottish Government actions

- In 2018, the Scottish Government announced its [commitment to create a 'Smoke Free Generation'](#) by reducing smoking prevalence in Scotland to 5% by 2034. Aligned with this goal, that year the Scottish Government launched the [Quit Your Way](#) service for smoking cessation.
- In 2023, the Scottish Government commissioned Public Health Scotland to conduct a [review of the available smoking cessation services](#) and make recommendations for the future delivery of these services. A key recommendation stated that a roundtable of key stakeholders in tobacco control, including Scottish Government, third sector organisations, and academics, should be held to consider the current situation in Scotland with regards to e-cigarette/vape use and establish the best way to protect children, young people, and non-smokers. A multidisciplinary group with national and local public health stakeholders was convened to implement the recommendations of the review.
- In 2023, the Scottish Government published the [Tobacco and Vaping Framework: Roadmap to 2034](#). This set out interventions and policies to help reduce the use of and associated harms from tobacco and vaping products in Scotland. The Scottish Government subsequently launched its [Take Hold Campaign](#) which provides information for parents, carers, and young people on vaping addiction and links to support through the Quit Your Way service.
- The Scottish Government recently introduced [a ban on the sale and supply of single-use vapes in Scotland](#). This will come into effect from the 1st June 2025.

Annamae Burrows

Trainee SPICe Researcher [12.05.2025]

The purpose of this briefing is to provide a brief overview of issues raised by the petition. SPICe research specialists are not able to discuss the content of petition briefings with petitioners or other members of the public. However, if you have any comments on any petition briefing you can email us at spice@parliament.scot

Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in petition briefings is correct at the time of publication. Readers should be aware however that these briefings are not necessarily updated or otherwise amended to reflect subsequent changes.

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Annexe C: Written submission

Scottish Government written submission, 6 May 2025

PE2155/A: Improve support for people trying to give up e-cigarettes and vaping

The Scottish Government recognises the role that vapes can play in helping some smokers to quit, but they should not be used by non-smokers or young people as a recreational product. We do not yet fully understand the long-term effects vaping has on our health, though evidence shows that they are not harm-free.

The UK wide [Tobacco and Vapes Bill](#) includes actions to reduce the appeal and availability of vapes to children and non-smokers, in line with some of the recent World Health Organisation and Royal College of Physicians recommendations, including restricting flavours, regulating point of sale displays, and regulating packaging.

In our [Tobacco and Vaping Framework](#) we committed to work to improve information around vapes and increase awareness of avenues for support in stopping vaping or smoking, and committed to continue to fund and support our cessation services, looking to see how we can further develop this critical service.

Since the launch of the framework, we have improved available information through our [Take Hold Campaign](#) which educates parents, carers and young people on vaping addiction and signposts them to support through NHS Inform and Quit Your Way Scotland. We also continue to work with Public Health Scotland and territorial Health Board colleagues to implement the recommendations from the Review of Smoking Cessation in Scotland and consider how these important services can continue to develop in the future.