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Pfizer New Zealand Limited

Wednesday, 01 April 2020

Ms Louisa Wall
Member for Manurewa
Chairperson
Health Select Committee

By email: Health@parliament.govt.nz

Dear Ms Wall,

Re: Smokefree Environments and Regulated Products (Vaping) Amendment Bill

Pfizer New Zealand (Pfizer) welcomes the opportunity to provide a written submission regarding the Smokefree Environments and Regulated Products (Vaping) Amendment Bill and is supportive of the goal for New Zealand to be smokefree by 2025. Pfizer recognises the importance of maintaining tobacco control and the progress made-to-date and supports measures to improve tobacco control with an aim of eliminating smoking.

Pfizer is committed to helping to address the global tobacco epidemic by supporting multi-faceted and comprehensive evidence-based tobacco control measures to prevent the development of future generations of smokers, encouraging and enabling smokers to quit smoking and helping ex-smokers remain smoke free. Using tobacco is an inherently harmful practice; a safe level of tobacco cigarette smoking has not been established and complete smoking cessation remains the only evidence-based method to reduce smoking related illness and death for smokers.¹ Harm reduction is a concept that employs the use of alternative sources of nicotine, such as electronic cigarettes or heated tobacco products as a strategy to reduce the consumption of tobacco cigarettes. There is no evidence to suggest that simply reducing exposure to select chemicals found in cigarettes can translate to reduced risk.² However, there is strong evidence to suggest that the use of counselling alongside medication can help people stop smoking.³

Pfizer notes that in January 2020 the World Health Organisation (WHO) provided further guidance around the use of e-cigarettes:⁴

- Currently, evidence reveals that these products are harmful to health and are not safe. However, it is too early to provide a clear answer on the long-term impact of using these products or being exposed to them⁴
- There is a growing body of evidence in some settings that never-smoker minors who use Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) at least double their chance of starting to smoke conventional tobacco cigarettes later in life⁴

There is currently a lack of consensus among national and global health authorities surrounding the regulation, safety and efficacy of using e-cigarettes for smoking cessation and the evidence to support e-cigarettes as an effective cessation method is inconsistent, with current evidence suggesting that the majority of e-cigarette users are continuing to smoke

tobacco cigarettes and may not achieve complete tobacco abstinence.^{5, 6} Pfizer recognises that reducing tobacco consumption may have a valuable role as a step towards smoking cessation,⁷ but the primary goal for smokers, physicians and policymakers should be to promote and support complete smoking cessation and abstinence based on evidence.

Thank you again for the opportunity to contribute to this submission. Pfizer New Zealand is available at any time to provide any further input as required.

Yours sincerely



Anne Harris
Managing Director
Pfizer Australia & New Zealand

References:

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4. World Health Organization Website, Q&A Update-E-cigarettes, posted 29 January 2020 <https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/e-cigarettes-how-risky-are-they>. Accessed 19 March 2020
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7. WHO. WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control https://www.who.int/tobacco/framework/WHO_FCTC_english.pdf