

Smoking and Vaping

Health Needs Assessment

Appendix 1: Definitions

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There are several different types of tobacco and vape products on sale. Their use and prevalence vary across regions and social groups. This document gives a brief overview of the different types of tobacco products available in the UK,

Smoked tobacco products

Smoked tobacco products include manufactured cigarettes, hand rolled tobacco or roll your own tobacco, cigars, pipes and waterpipes (also known as ‘Shisha’, ‘hookah’, ‘hubble-bubble’, ‘narghile’). Although other types of tobacco are used across the country, manufactured cigarettes and hand rolled tobacco are the dominant form of smoked tobacco across the globe¹.

- Waterpipes are used to burn charcoal and inhale tobacco, after its smoke has been passed through a water basin. They are often used to smoke tobacco and other substances. Waterpipe tobacco may be flavoured with fruits or sugar syrup and aromatic substances, and the sweetened flavoured waterpipe tobacco is commonly called maasel. There are often misconceptions about waterpipes, as accessories are often sold with a claim that they reduce the harm of smoking. However, there is no evidence to support such claims².
- Cigars are made of tobacco leaves or parts of leaves rolled together and covered with a binder (a firm tobacco leaf which holds the filler together and gives the cigar its shape) and an outer wrapper made of natural or reconstituted tobacco. The three most common types sold are cigars, cigarillos, and little cigars³.
- Pipes are reusable hollow bowls used for smoking tobacco; it is equipped with a stem through which smoke is drawn into the mouth. The bowl can be made out of clay, corncob, meerschaum (a mineral composed of magnesia, silica, and water), briarwood⁴.

Smokeless tobacco products

Smokeless tobacco is a non-combusted tobacco product. Smokeless tobacco is used across the world in a range of forms either orally or nasally. Used orally, smokeless tobacco can be chewed, sucked, applied to the teeth or gums (e.g. topical toothpaste or powder), dissolved in the mouth, or gargled. A range of smokeless tobacco products are often imported from South Asia, and used by communities of South Asian origin in the UK⁵.

Tobacco for oral use, specifically tobacco products designed to be sucked or held in the mouth, is prohibited in England under the Tobacco for Oral Use (Safety) Regulations 1992. However, these regulations do not include chewing tobacco or smoked tobacco.

- Chewing tobacco is cured tobacco in the form of loose leaf, plug, or twist
- Dry snuff is loose finely cut or powdered dry tobacco that is typically sniffed through the nostrils
- Moist snuff and snus are cut tobacco that can be loose or pouched and placed in the mouth. Dip is a common form of moist snuff.
- Some dissolvable tobacco products can be classified as smokeless tobacco products.
- E-shisha, also referred to as “e-hookahs” or “hookah pens”, are sweetened liquid is electrically heated to create an aerosol that is then inhaled. They can be flavoured so that the taste is similar to that of the flavoured waterpipe tobacco, but do not involve charcoal combustion⁶.

Non-Tobacco Nicotine products

Non-Tobacco Nicotine (NTN) products refer to nicotine products that were not derived from a tobacco plant. NTN includes 'synthetic' nicotine, which is made in a lab and has a similar molecular makeup as naturally occurring nicotine.

- An e-cigarette is a battery-operated device that allows the user to breathe in nicotine through a vapour. They are sometimes referred to as Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) and this term also includes devices such as vapes, e-hookahs, e-pipes, and e-cigars. These devices work by heating a liquid so that it turns into a vapour for the user to inhale, or 'vape'.
- Although the vapour may look like steam, it does not contain any water. The liquid is made from chemicals called propylene glycol and/or glycerine, and it can have different flavours and different amounts of nicotine, which the user can select. The 'e-liquid' in e-cigarettes usually contains nicotine derived from a tobacco plant. However, more recently a growing number of companies are using NTN⁷.

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