

Meeting the novel product/e-cigarette challenge

ERS Position on Tobacco Harm Reduction

Primary Prevention Meeting

European Cancer Organisation (ECO)

28th May 2021

13:00-16:00 CEST

Prof. Jonathan Grigg

ERS Tobacco Control Committee Chair



Heated Tobacco Products

Heated tobacco products consist of a small tobacco stick that is heated electronically, rather than burned



Electronic Cigarettes

E-cigarettes produce an aerosol by heating a liquid that usually contains nicotine, flavorings, and other chemicals. They help delivering nicotine without tobacco smoke

Tobacco Harm Reduction

Aims to reduce the adverse health, social and economic consequences of the use of psychoactive drugs without necessarily reducing drug consumption

Prioritises a public health perspective aiming to stop or reduce immediate harms when at-risks individuals do not respond to treatments

Harm Reduction Strategy

Tobacco Harm Reduction Strategy

Recommends the use of alternative nicotine delivery products (e.g., e-cigarettes or heated tobacco) to smokers for their reduced toxicity instead of conventional cigarettes

Replaces a very harmful product with a less – but still – harmful product

The concept is intuitive and attractive but slightly more complex in reality

The ERS position in a nutshell

Tobacco Harm Reduction cannot be recommended as a population-based strategy



New products are not as harmless as commonly believed



Can have a negative impact on public health and youth in particular



New products are not highly effective as smoking-cessation tools



New products are consumer products that are mass-marketed by the industry



Most smokers want to quit and dislike being nicotine dependent



The Tobacco Epidemic can be curbed without harm reduction

Novel Products & Smoking-Cessation

- Most nicotine-delivery products, including heated tobacco and e-cigarettes are highly addictive
- Despite claims made by the industry, daily use of e-cigarettes while smoking appears to increase the attempts to stop or reduce smoking, but is not associated with smoking cessation
- Most persons use alternative nicotine delivery products as a supplement to conventional cigarettes, not as an alternative to smoking
- **We recommend evidence-based tobacco dependence treatments which have proved to be safe and cost-effective**

90%

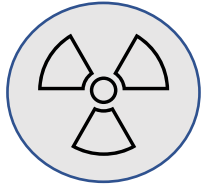
of smokers want to quit

BUT

60-80%

of e-cigarettes users
continue to smoke

Novel Products & health risks



*Independent research is still scarce but increasing evidence shows that novel products are not risk-free for human health and **should be further investigated***

Electronic Cigarettes

- Acute Lung Injury (EVALI)
- Increases risk of cardiovascular diseases and lung disorders
- Adverse effects of the development of the fetus
- **Potential link with cancer growth and development**

Heated Tobacco Products

- Potential risk to damage human bronchial epithelial cells
- Potential risk to increase oxidative stress and inflammation, infections and airway remodeling
- Potential risk to decrease blood vessel function

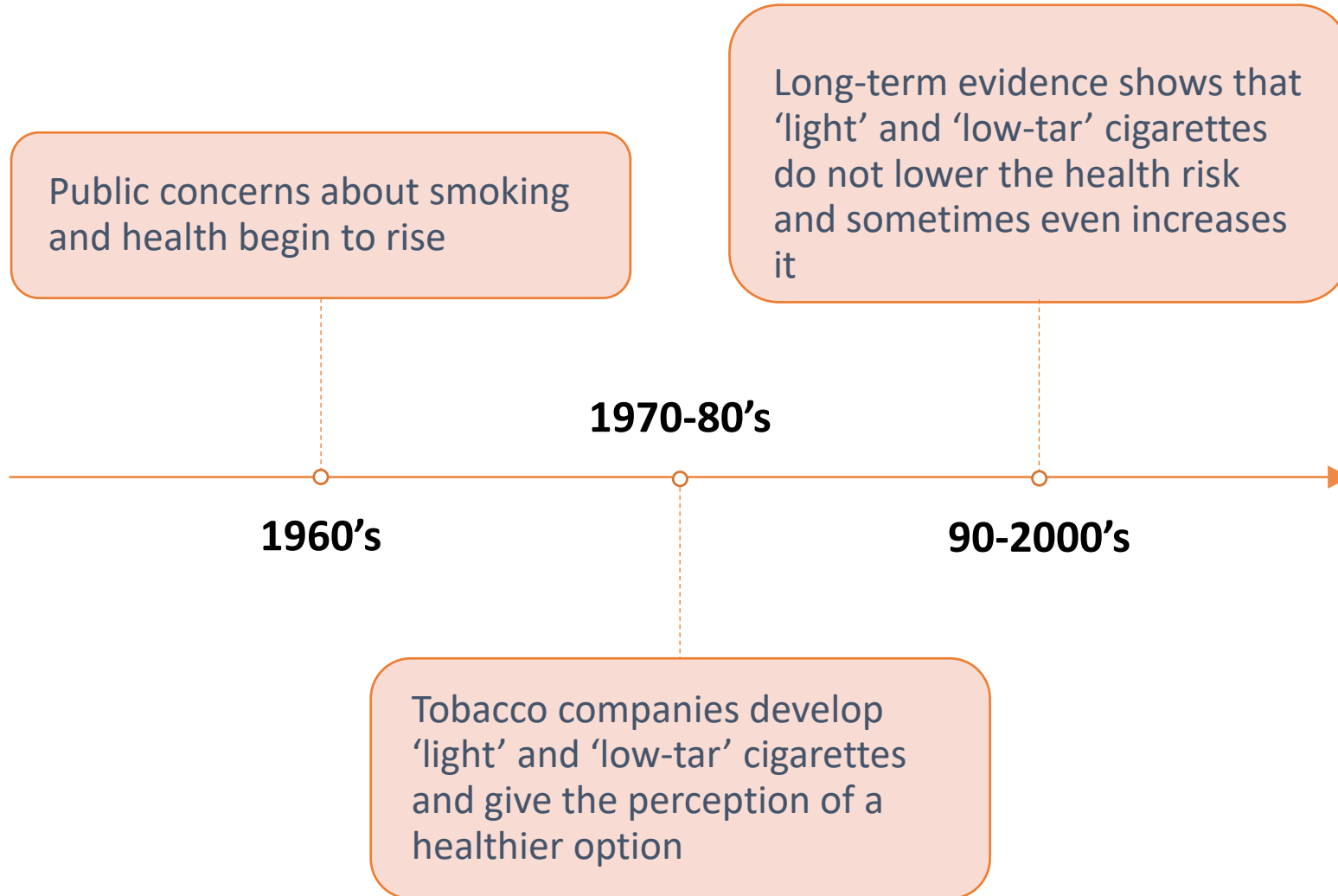
Nicotine

- Increases the risk of diseases (eg. Diabetes)
- Affects the adolescent's brain development
- Use during adolescence increases the risk for future addiction to other drugs
- Toxic to developing fetus

Long-term effects are **unknown**

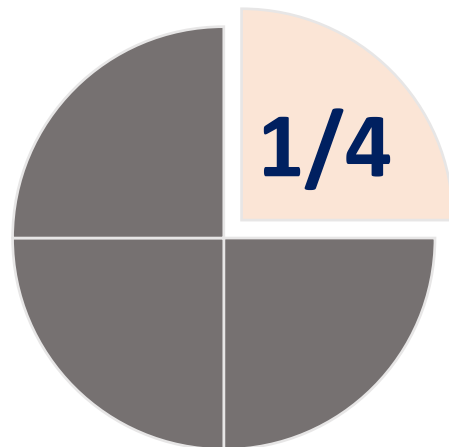
The lessons of 'light' and 'low-tar' cigarettes

The story of light cigarettes is a good example of how the industry uses so-called reduced exposure to mislead smokers who want to quit

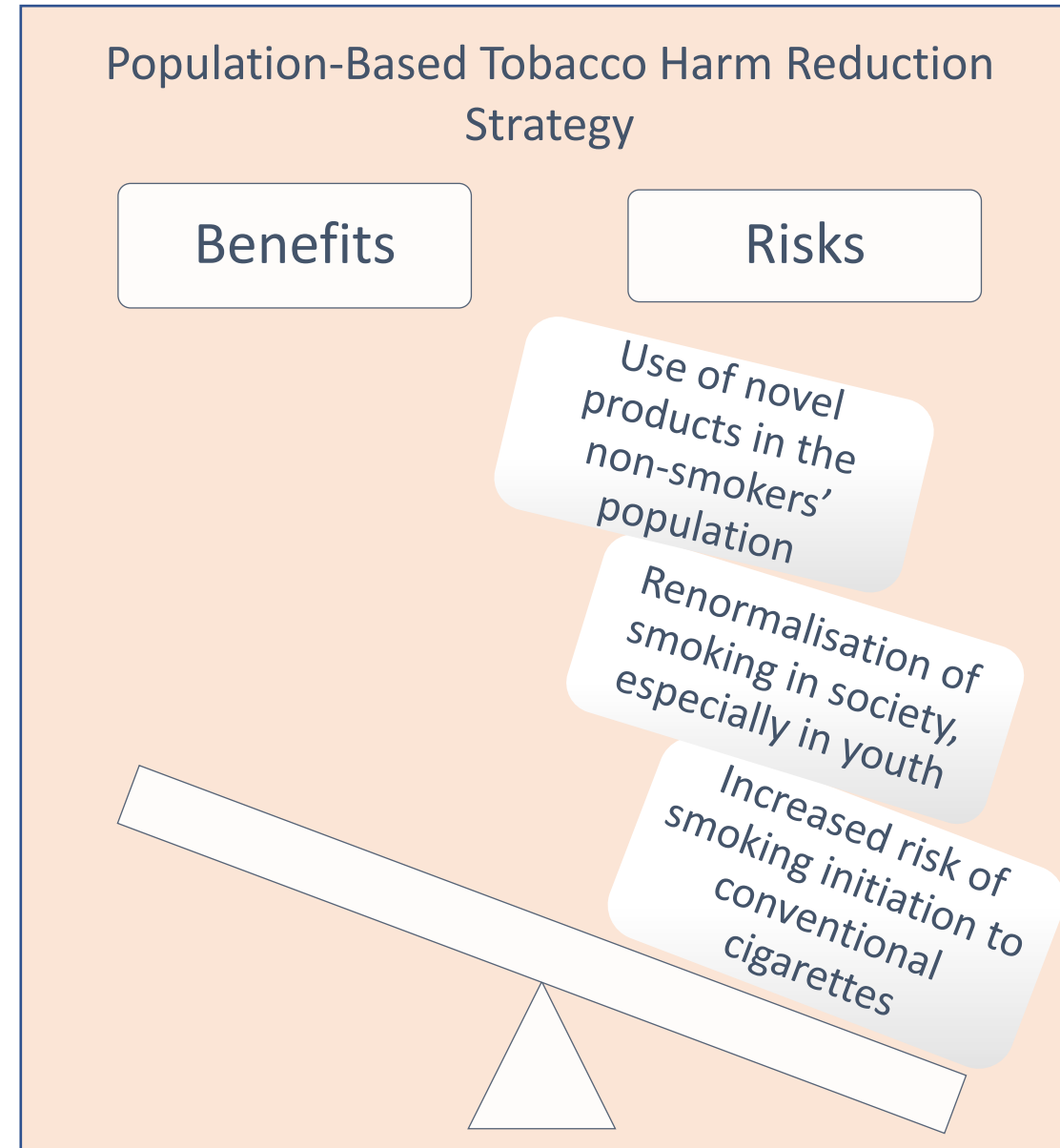


Impact on public health & youth

- Even if novel products turn out to be less harmful, we must consider their impact on the whole population, not only on smokers who represent a minority
- Novel products strongly appeal to children and adolescents, especially to those at low risk of taking up smoking
- E-cigarettes uptake by children and young people has already grown exponentially



of e-cigarettes users in Australia have never smoked



Novel Products & Marketing

- The tobacco industry applies the same marketing approach to novel products as for conventional cigarettes
- E-cigarette advertising expenditures, including towards youth, have increased dramatically, and social media are used extensively
- The tactics include statements about their safeness compared to conventional cigarettes and on their advantages as agents to promote smoking cessation
- At the same time, the tobacco companies reinvent themselves as concerned and ethical corporations, with initiatives such as **Philip Morris Institute for a Tobacco Free World**, and the “**Foundation for a Smoke-Free World**”,



Novel Products & The Tobacco Epidemic

- The decline of smoking due to tobacco control is surely one of public health's greatest successes
- Unlike new products, the below tobacco control policies & programmes applied at a population-level have proved to be effective methods



High-prices



Plain packaging



Point of sale
display ban



Comprehensive
marketing bans



Anti-smoking
campaigns



Free National smoking cessation services

Content from Philip Morris International 

We are replacing cigarettes with better alternatives

By 2025, our goal is for smoke-free products to make up more than 50 percent of our net revenue.



“Harm reduction is our common goal. We must cooperate to achieve it as soon as possible.”

Showing confusion



The latest study identified seven strategies used by the tobacco industry

Playing EC off against Member States

Promoting untruths

Postponing regulation

Playing the victim

Protesting against regulators

Preying on third countries

Pushing new technologies

Conclusion

- ERS cannot recommend any product damaging the lungs and human health
- Novel products remain both harmful and highly addictive and do not help smokers to beat their addiction to nicotine
- Novel products represent a danger for public health, especially for young people
- We should focus on promoting evidence-based and effective regulatory measures to reduce smoking and continue to support smokers who wish to quit

A photograph of a presentation slide from the ERS International Congress 2019. The slide has a red header and footer. The main content area is white with a red title and a large black word. On the right, there is a photo of a man speaking and his name. The footer contains the ERS logo, congress details, and a QR code with a URL.

9C
10:45 - 12:45
E-cigarettes and heated tobacco: a blessing or a curse? The latest scientific update
Chairs : Linnea Hedman, Isabel Saraiva, Jørgen Vestbo

The ERS' position on e-cigarettes

Don't

Jørgen Vestbo
The ERS leadership's statement on e-cigarettes

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