Commons Select Committee

E-cigarettes inquiry launched

25th October 2017

To be submitted by

8th December 2017

That's 45 Days

Every day in the EU around 1,920 people die directly from smoking cigarettes
(one every 45 seconds)

In the past 45 days

Deaths in the EU directly because of smoking. 86,400

Known deaths directly from vaping ZERO

2003 E Cigarettes are invented
Beijing, China, Hon Lik a 52 year old pharmacist / inventor & smoker became the inventor of electronic cigarettes.

He reportedly created the device after his father, also a heavy smoker died of lung cancer.

E Cigarettes have been around for 14 years.

In the past 14 years

Deaths in the EU directly because of smoking.
10,000,000

Known deaths directly from vaping
ZERO
Good Morning,

I apologise for the dramatic header page, however I think it needs to be said before anybody discusses vaping / E Cigarettes as 10 Million deaths seem to have been ignored or just taken for granted.

I'm David McClure, a 56 year old business man (running a successful electronics production equipment company for the last 30 years) and have NEVER smoked a cigarette in my life.

Why as a non smoker am I submitting this information? The truth is that I now own and run one of Southampton's most popular Vaping Store with in excess of 2,000 + members.

I set this business up for my partner who I met over 4 years ago (Sue) who was a smoker. She would regularly pop outside to have a cigarette and would come back in reeking of smoke, to a non smoker this is repulsive to say the least, Sue knew I was not keen on her smoking, but I'm not her keeper and as I said to her (at the time) she could set herself on fire is she wanted too.

She was keen to give up and in the past had used gums and patches as some of her family had done unsuccessfully before, along with most of her friends also smoking giving up was not on the top of her priorities.

With my gift of a disposable E Cigarette she tried them but soon discovered they were not very effective, she had heard that the liquid type you refill were much better so soon purchased one of these which did the trick for her.

That was over 4 years ago and to date has never smoked a cigarette, in fact she has not smoked over 22,000 cigarettes because of giving up.

Giving up smoking has changed her life, she now no longer has the need to use an inhaler to the extent she did because of her asthma, she does not get out of breath when exercising, her teeth are no longer stained, her skin is much better, her cloths don't smell nor her hair & she now can taste food in a way she previously could not as a smoker.

As a businessman with links abroad I was fascinated by these devices (my father died I believe prematurely because of being an ex smoker in the war) so in mid 2013 imported some units and E Liquid to help her further get the correct device and liquid to suit her needs as the availability of products and outlets was very limited where we live in the New Forest.

Word soon got around that we had these devices amongst friends and family and it became clear to us seeing Sue's progress and quitting smoking her friends wanted to do the same.

This was the cornerstone idea of our company now called CiggyJuice, we very soon realised that customers needed advise and making of liquids to suit their own needs, in flavour and strength so we began to invest time and money in sourcing the right ingredients to make the best liquids to help people ditch the cigarettes.
Health

- Myself I am unable to advise in any way how this has changed simply because I have never smoked, I will try different vape products that we make all the time yet in the past 4 years have not succumbed to the apparent lure of nicotine. My partner however tells another story, along with nearly all of our 2,000+ customers, just about all of them tell us that stopping smoking and starting to vape has changed their lives without any doubt. I am sure that if you need I can gather at least 50 ex smokers together who now vape to discuss the impact on their health and benefits of vaping over smoking. Please ask!

One of our customers (Carol) is around 65 years old and was diagnosed with COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease) around 3 years ago, she was told in no uncertain terms that she must give up smoking immediately. This she did and came to us for her first E Cigarette. The first 30 months of ceasing to smoke and vape her lung function remained the same, it did not get any worse but also it did not get any better, she felt better, easier to breath and all the other symptoms of stopping smoking but it was only in the last 6 months she burst into our shop and let us all know that her lung function has started to gradually improve, it had taken over 30 months for her lungs to start to recover from all the years of smoking cigarettes.

As Michael Russell, the father of tobacco harm reduction theory and the developer of nicotine gum, put it in 1976: "People smoke for nicotine but they die from the tar."

Nicotine has had very bad press over the years being wrongly blamed for smokers illnesses and deaths, just recently on a BBC programme of Homes under the Hammer, the presenter & the buyer of the dilapidated house quoted on no less than 7 occasions, look at the nicotine stains on the walls where the pictures had been. How many times have we heard people say this about the walls in the pubs before the smoking ban, it's not nicotine it's TAR!

Nicotine in it's pure state is a poison, so is caffeine yet we don't ban or restrict coffee cup size or regulate coffee or tea. In our shop we have a chart (as shown) which illustrates how strong pure nicotine is, I ask customers to guess where 20mg is (the strongest we are allowed to sell currently due to EU regulations) on a chart with the actual levels removed

Well over 90% of them get it wrong and think it is somewhere between 100 – 450 on the scale.

Even the two gentlemen from Southampton Trading Standards on a recent visit to our store got it wildly wrong, believing it would be around the 200 mark, and this is the governing body that is policing the TPD, if they don't even know what low levels of nicotine are used in vaping then it seems there is little hope. Needless to say they left our business with more knowledge about vaping and e cigarettes than when they arrived!
The low levels (even 20mg) can be likened to falling off a 100ft ladder. Without doubt
Written evidence submitted by CiggyJuice Ltd (ECG0043)

The low levels (even 20mg) can be likened to falling off a 100ft ladder. Without a doubt you would probably die if you fell from the top of it (1000mg), however if you fell from the first rung (20mg) you would hardly even notice, this is exactly how negligible nicotine in vape liquid actually is. Most of our customers are on levels of nicotine of between 2 – 6mg which is very hard to see on the scale.

Nicotine is an incredibly foul tasting liquid and is also an emetic (which induces vomiting when ingested) this would also explain the shortage of any news on individuals accidentally poisoning themselves using e liquid.

We are told that nicotine is dangerous and should not be in contact with the skin, or taken orally, however, this makes no sense at all considering that Nicotine Gum and Patches (which contain nicotine) are either chewed or slapped directly onto your skin!!

We constantly see in the press FAKE NEWS such as

“Popcorn Lung”
“E Liquid containing Anti Freeze”
“Breathing Formaldehyde from E Cigarettes”
“Exploding E Cigarettes”

This is nothing but propaganda spread by the various arms of Big Tobacco and especially Big Pharma.

It is not at all helpful in reassuring current smokers to make the switch to E Cigarettes or Vaping, which we know is at least 95% safer.

We constantly hear that “Vaping is new” or “We don't know the long term implications of E cigarettes” or “Not enough research has been done”

I know that this research has already been done and by whom.

Big Pharma would not stand by and let anything damage their profits, lets face it, to them we are just a number, if you smoke that's great as they will supply drugs to treat you, if you want to quit smoking they offer NRT (Nicotine Replacement Therapy) Gums, Sprays, Patches, or drugs such as Varenicline.

How much money do you think they would have spent to test and discredit E Liquids and E Cigarettes? £100,000 maybe more to protect their profits and products, yet what do we hear from their testing of E Liquid? NOTHING! Their silence is deafening. If there was one ounce of evidence Big Pharma would have been shouting from the tops of buildings. I even note that one of the submissions (against E Cigarettes) is from a UK Big Pharma.

We are lucky enough to be involved with the NHS (quitters) and are working with a new idea with them that will be unveiled in early January. Having worked with the girls from quitters they have told us again and again that the E Cigarette is the best weapon they have out of any of the products available to stop their clients smoking!
We have proved again and again that with the right support we can help people give up smoking, and if they wish to reduce their nicotine levels so such an insignificant amount that finally giving up vaping (should they wish) will be really easy. We have customers who go from 60 cigarettes a day to zero, that would be unheard of just a few years ago.

Sue started E Cigarettes on around 24mg of nicotine, but with the advances in product technology she has now reduced her level to around 1.5mg

I have asked her if she would like to stop vaping, she has considered doing so but says that she simply enjoys it too much, it's now about the flavours for her and not the nicotine, I think for some it's the nicotine, others it's the habit of something to hold in their hands, others it's the hand to mouth habit. By being a non smoker I have talked and discussed with thousands of customers and one size does not fit all.

Over the years we have seen customers quit all together, most continue to enjoy vaping and reduce gradually over time their nicotine dependence, some fail and go back on the cigarettes, and some that have sadly died because of the irreversible damage they have done to their bodies through years of smoking.

So many customers who have been lifelong smokers are always telling us “I wish I had never tried that first cigarette” I really don't know of anybody who thought it was just a wonderful experience, the peer pressure from other children or teenagers is considerable when that first naughty cigarette is lit, E Cigarettes give the release of that pressure simply because if young people decide to try it they can, nobody knows if there is nicotine in it or not, kids simply want to follow the herd and think they look cool, in the past it was cigarettes, today it is vaping.

If either of my children (13 & 17) came home with a vape or had tried it I would not be bothered one bit, however, should they come home with a cigarette my heart would drop knowing that this could ultimately ruin their lives.

Youngsters want to experiment and I firmly believe that they should be allowed to try E Cigarettes, I have seen evidence from other parents who’s children smoked, then started to vape (to get them off the cigarettes) some of them succeeded however others gave up the vape as the power of the cigarette addiction had already consumed them.

I firmly believe that given the right signals now we can persuade the youngsters of today to ditch smoking completely. If a youngster starts to use an E Cigarette for some time, and, THEN tries a cigarette they will not smoke them or touch them going forward, cigarettes are disgusting compared to vaping, the gateway effect simply does not exist, or if it does it is the other way around.

On regulation:

Since the “North Korean Style” regulations that call themselves the TPD arrived in the UK earlier this year we were effectively put out of business by the EU using our existing model of selling E Liquid. No matter how hard we look we are unable to find any Tobacco in our products. We were promised by the EU that the cost to the whole industry in the UK would
be no more than £1.5 Million, however, our cost to register just one liquid flavour was £5,000 given that we sell 300 flavours it does not need a calculator to work out that our cost alone for our little company would be £1.5 Million

We are forced to sell tiny 10ml bottles at a time, prior to this regulation we would sell 50ml or 100ml of liquid to each and every customer, the new TPD regulation has created a monster of plastic waste. Please look at and consider the enclosed picture of what we used to supply compared to what we now supply to satisfy the EU lawmakers, a plastic increase of over 3.5 times the amount we used to consume, it's a pity that we are having petitions to save our planet of plastic waste in our oceans, yet the EU has successfully managed to enforce regulation that has well over tripled ours.
Written evidence submitted by CiggyJuice Ltd (ECG0043)

Pre TPD

5 x 30ml bottles 12mg
I thought one of the big things about the EU was protecting the environment!

Post TPD

15 x Nic Shots +
15 Flavour Shots

I guess not then!!
We talk about possible deaths associated with vaping, yet to date I see none, however, I have customers now having to fill up tiny 2ml tanks (yes more EU regulation) and I think there will certainly be deaths caused by vaping, not through using the devices however, rather that the lorry drivers or motorists who are forced to constantly fill their pathetic 2ml EU regulated tanks will crash because they are so engrossed in continually filling them up!

We are even forced to sell hardware (that is empty and contains no nicotine liquid) stupid signs saying “This Product Contains Nicotine which is a Highly Addictive Substance” plastered on the bottom 1/3 of the packaging. Why are Gums, Patches and Sprays etc which also contain nicotine exempt from this ridiculous regulation?

I hope that when we eventually leave the EU that the British Government will see sense and regulate E Cigarettes with the “Light Touch Approach” that we were promised. I was surprised that as most of the Conservative MEP’s voted against the TPD that such strict rules have been applied to our industry. I was even more shocked that ALL of the Green Party MEP’s Voted FOR the TPD, agreeing to vote for the tripping of plastic waste! It turns out that The Green Party is not very Green after all.

• The TPD should never have included E Cigarettes, I believe that it was lobbied extensively by Big Pharma for their own gains, it is very sad that a product that has the potential to save literally billions of lives over the next decade has been jumped upon by big business purely for profit and not for the benefit of our health.

For those of you who have not done so, please take an hour out of your day to watch the documentary “A Billion Lives” I was very proud to be at the local premier screening of this very informative and factually accurate film by Aaron Biebert.

• Regarding the safety of e-cigarette devices, I am sure I am not the only person who has noticed that all the newspaper articles and scare tactics by the media for whatever reason of devices exploding or causing fires etc. seem to have totally disappeared. Most of the incidents reported in the past (that I looked into) were caused by user error or once again fake news from the media to create sensational headlines.

I would strongly urge any of you who would like to know what it’s like on the ground to come and visit our outlet in Southampton. You will talk to real people and hear real stories of how E Cigarettes and vaping have changed their lives for the better.

December 2017