

The report by the Trimbos Institute should not be used as any basis for policy making. It is a one-sided, biased report that drags up every half-baked scare story about vaping without any balancing consideration of the benefits for smokers of all ages.

You only need to read to page 7 of the Concept Scheme to find that vaping may cause 'Popcorn Lung' - the dreadful and irreversible disease bronchiolitis obliterans. It doesn't. Vaping has been mainstream for over 10 years and there are over 30 million vapers worldwide. The number of cases of bronchiolitis obliterans so far? Zero. Yes, zero. And there will never be any. Yet this is put forward as evidence of the potential harms of vaping by the Trimbos Institute. This is not the quality of evidence that should inform government policy.

(The argument is that the flavouring chemical diacetyl has been linked to bronchiolitis obliterans. So it has - when breathed in large amounts in powdered form. There is no evidence that it can cause the disease when inhaled at the levels that could be found in an e-cigarette. And even this is irrelevant because the very small theoretical risk of diacetyl was recognised 10 years ago by all reputable manufacturers and it was simply eliminated from the products. In regulated markets such as the UK it is also banned by law. But why would the Trimbos Institute let any of this get in the way of a good scare story?)

Vaping saved my life. I smoked for 42 years - my health was suffering but I just couldn't quit. I switched seamlessly and my health returned to the extent that I completed an off-road marathon 11 months after switching. It was like a miracle. That was 8 years ago and I'm still vaping and still perfectly fit at 66 years old. (I used tobacco flavour for the first two days - I never want to taste the stuff again.)

Your plan to ban flavours is misguided. It is based on flawed evidence. It will not achieve its desired aims. It will reduce the number of smokers switching. It will cost lives.