

Dr Marisa Paterson MLA

MEMBER FOR MURRUMBIDGEE

MEDIA RELEASE

2 August 2021

Minimising harm caused by vaping and e-cigarettes in our community

ACT Labor backbencher, Dr Marisa Paterson MLA, will be moving a motion in tomorrow's Assembly sittings to call for stricter regulations, and continued education programs in our community, about vaping and e-cigarettes.

While Dr Paterson can't call for an end to vaping, she can do everything within her power of responsibility to minimise its harm, especially for children and young adults in our community.

As a mum of three children, Dr Paterson has been alarmed by the uptake of vaping in the community, including by teenagers and young adults.

"As a relatively new product, the effects of vaping and e-cigarettes are not yet known or understood. Leading medical and health associations in Australia and globally warn of caution and advise governments to adopt a precautionary approach to all aspects of vaping and e-cigarettes" Dr Paterson said.

Existing legislation in the ACT prohibits the supply of vaping products to anyone under 18. It also prohibits advertising of vaping and e-cigarette products. However, Dr Paterson believes more can be done, especially at the federal level, to regulate a national approach to flavoured vaping products, display of health warnings on packaging and the requirement for child-proof packaging.

Locally, Dr Paterson will move that the Assembly calls on the ACT Government to continue to develop programs that educate and inform Canberrans, particularly younger Canberrans, about the risks of e-cigarettes, preventing their uptake and use.

Dr Paterson said: "the National Health and Medical Research Council is currently funding studies into a range of matters about e-cigarettes; among them – to obtain further data about existing evidence from longitudinal studies which suggests that e-cigarette use by non-smokers is associated with future uptake of tobacco smoking; and to determine to what, if any, extent e-cigarettes are effective in helping people quit smoking".

Dr Paterson said "there is nothing to be gained from smoking. We, as a community, need to work together to de-normalise the behaviour. Smoking is already considered anti-social. We need to continue to support programs such as the national Quitline to assist those in our community with a nicotine addiction.

"And we need to ensure that others, particularly children and young adults, do not take it up".

Dr Paterson further states that the effect of her motion will "ensure that commentary about e-cigarettes and vaping is made by governments and health authorities, and not by those with a commercial interest in the promotion, advertising and marketing of these products".

Statement ends

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