



# EFFECTIVENESS OF E-CIGARETTE INFORMATION MESSAGES

Phillip Gendall PhD<sup>1</sup>, Janet Hoek PhD<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Public Health, University of Otago, Wellington, New Zealand

## INTRODUCTION

- Researchers generally agree that smokers who switch completely from smoking to vaping using an e-cigarette will face fewer risks than if they continue smoking.
- However, electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) are not harmless, and non-smokers who begin vaping are likely to face greater risks than if they had remained smoke-free and vape-free.
- Thus, developing messages that promote switching among one group while deterring uptake among another presents several challenges.

## RESEARCH QUESTION

How effectively do different messages promote switching to ENDS among smokers and deter ENDS uptake among non-smokers?

## METHODS

### Sample and Procedure:

- Using an online survey of 519 New Zealand smokers (n=270 ENDS users) and 486 non-smokers (n= 54 ENDS users), we tested:
  - Non-smokers' responses to two messages (potential health risks of vaping and nicotine addiction)
  - Smokers' responses to four messages (three explaining reduced harm and an addiction message).

### Measures

- Non-smokers used a 5-point scale (1=not at all; 5=extremely) to assess each message's effect on:**
- Concern about ENDS' health risks;
  - Motivation not to use ENDS;
  - Belief that ENDS pose similar risks to smoking.

- Smokers used the same scale to assess each message's effect on:**
- Concern about smoking's health risks;
  - Motivation to switch completely to ENDS;
  - Belief that ENDS pose fewer health risks than smoking.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project was funded by the Health Research Council of New Zealand (grant 16/149).  
Luke Pilkinton-Ching for this poster design.

### CONTACTS

Janet Hoek, University of Otago, janet.hoek@otago.ac.nz

### CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

There are no conflicts of interest to report.

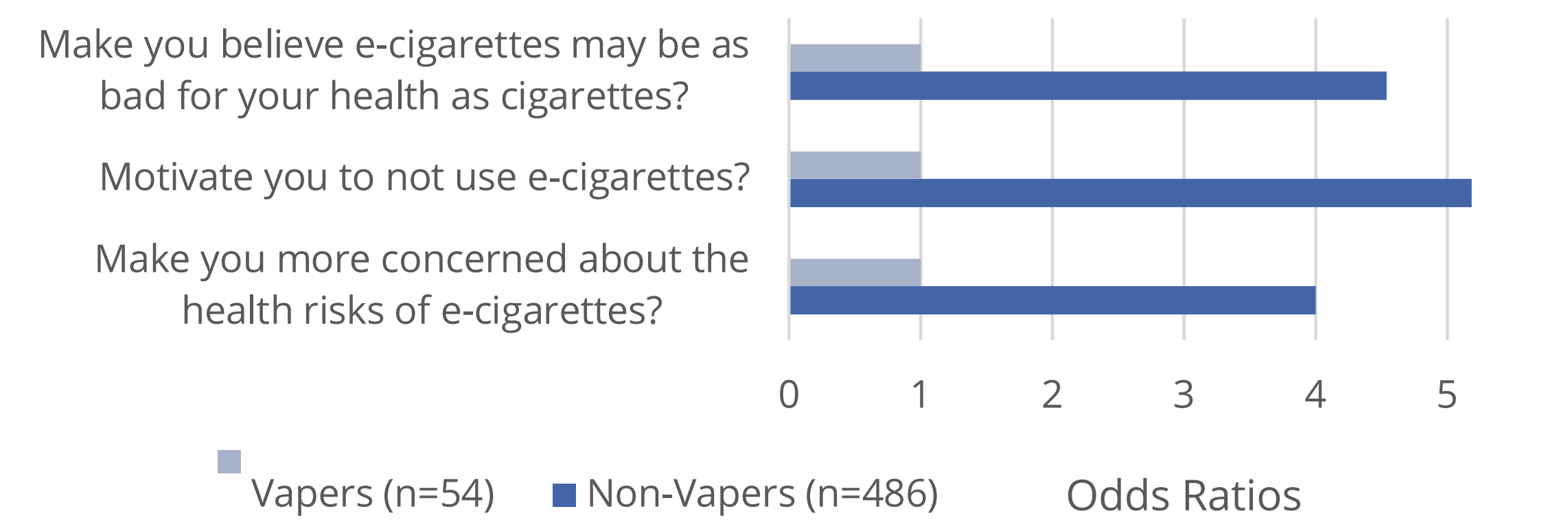
## RESULTS

### Non-Smokers (following exposure to messages on potential health risks and addiction)

- Non-smokers who did not vape were more likely than non-smokers who did vape to:
  - Believe ENDS may be as harmful or addictive as smoking;
  - Be motivated not to use ENDS;
  - Feel more concerned about the health risks of ENDS.

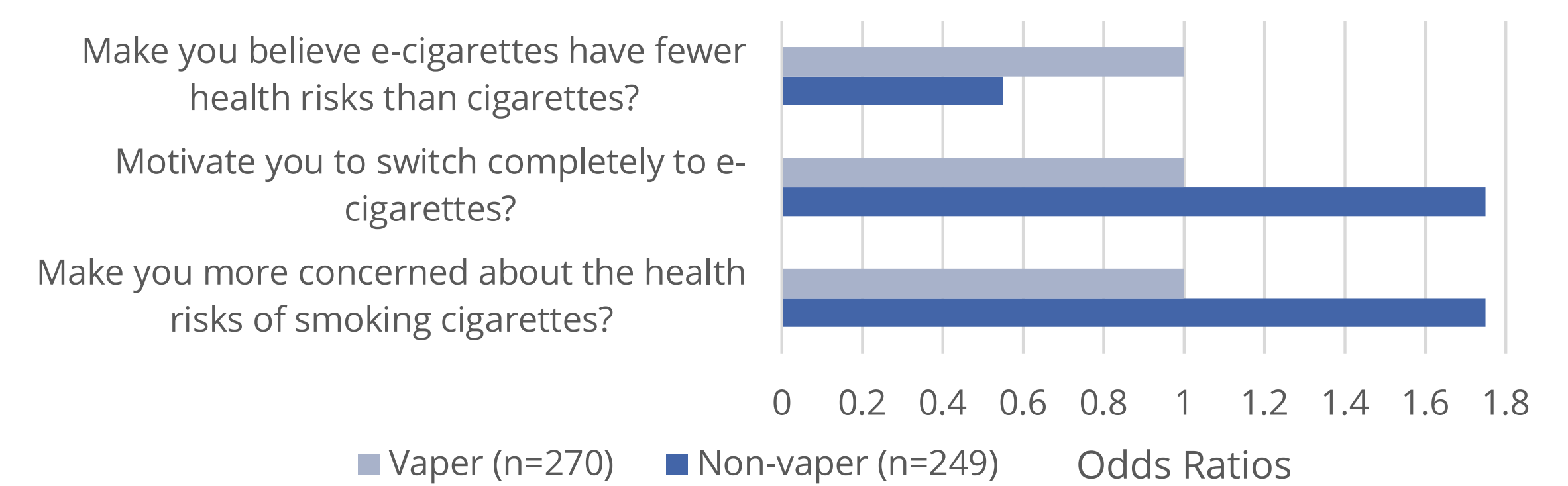
#### Non-smokers:

Vaping products that contain nicotine are highly addictive



#### Smokers:

Vaping products that contain nicotine are highly addictive

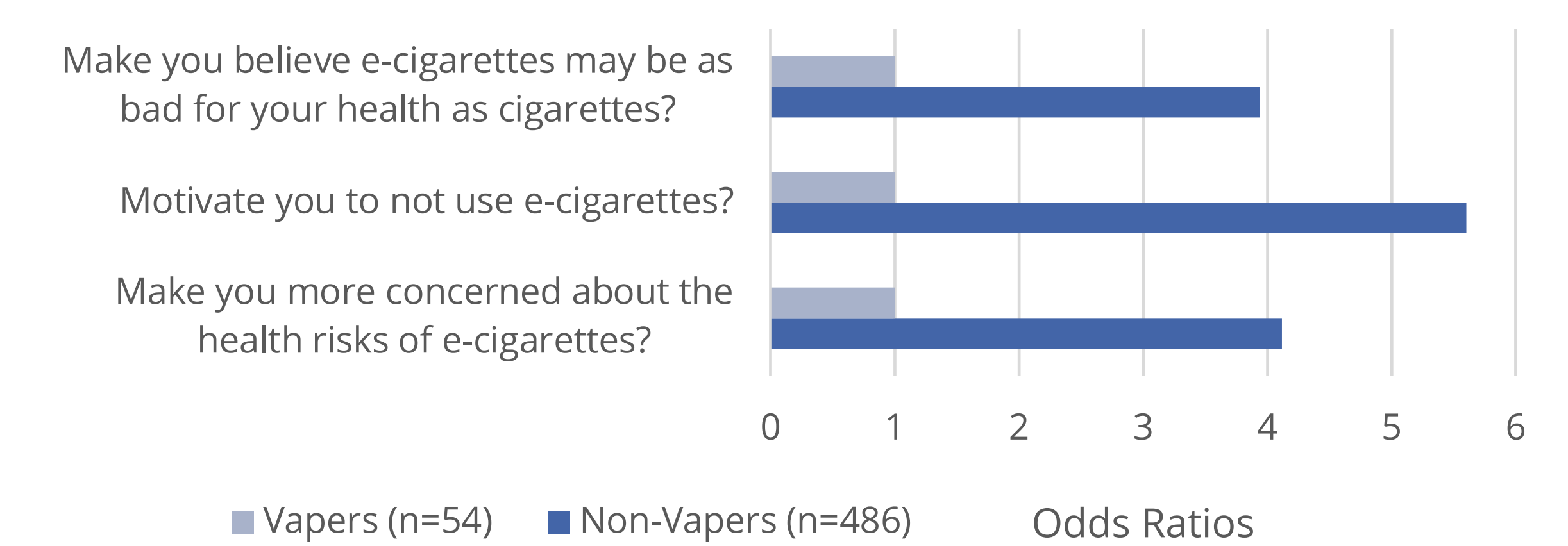


### Smokers (following exposure to message on reduced health harms)

- Smokers who did not vape were less likely than smokers who did vape to:
  - Believe ENDS have fewer health risks than smoking;
  - Feel motivated to switch completely to ENDS;
  - Feel more concerned about the health risks of smoking.

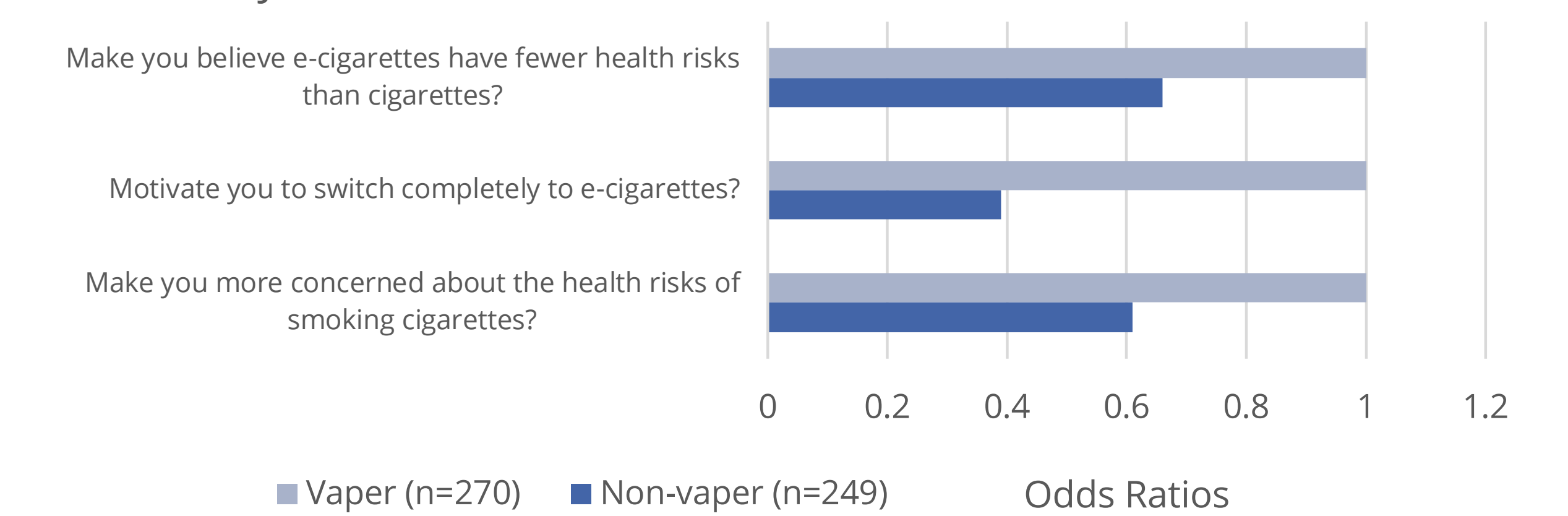
#### Non-smokers:

Taking up vaping may harm your health



#### Smokers:

Switching completely from smoking to vaping will reduce harms to your health



## CONCLUSIONS

- On-pack messages about nicotine addiction and health risks of vaping appear to have more effect on non-ENDS users than on ENDS users.
- These messages could potentially reinforce non-smokers' decision not to use ENDS.
- Encouraging ENDS users who smoke to switch fully from smoking to vaping may require stronger interventions than messaging alone.

