

Reasons for stopping e-cigarette use amongst smokers:

Findings from the ITC New Zealand Survey

White M,¹ Edwards R,¹ Stanley J,² Hoek J,¹ Waa AM,¹ Kaai SC,³ Ouimet J,³ Quah AOK,³ Fong GT,^{3,4,5}

¹ Department of Public Health, University of Otago, Wellington, New Zealand, ² Dean's Department, University of Otago, Wellington, New Zealand, ³ Department of Psychology, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, ⁴ School of Public Health and Health Systems, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, ⁵ Ontario Institute for Cancer Research, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Presented at the Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco, New Orleans, Louisiana, USA: March 11-14



Key findings:

The most common reasons reported amongst smokers who had stopped vaping were related to ECs being less satisfying than smoked tobacco and of limited usefulness as tool to switch from smoking. Concerns about the harmfulness of ECs and device safety were also common amongst smokers.

Background



Objective

Identify reasons for stopping EC use reported in a sample of New Zealand (NZ) smokers who had previously vaped.

Methods

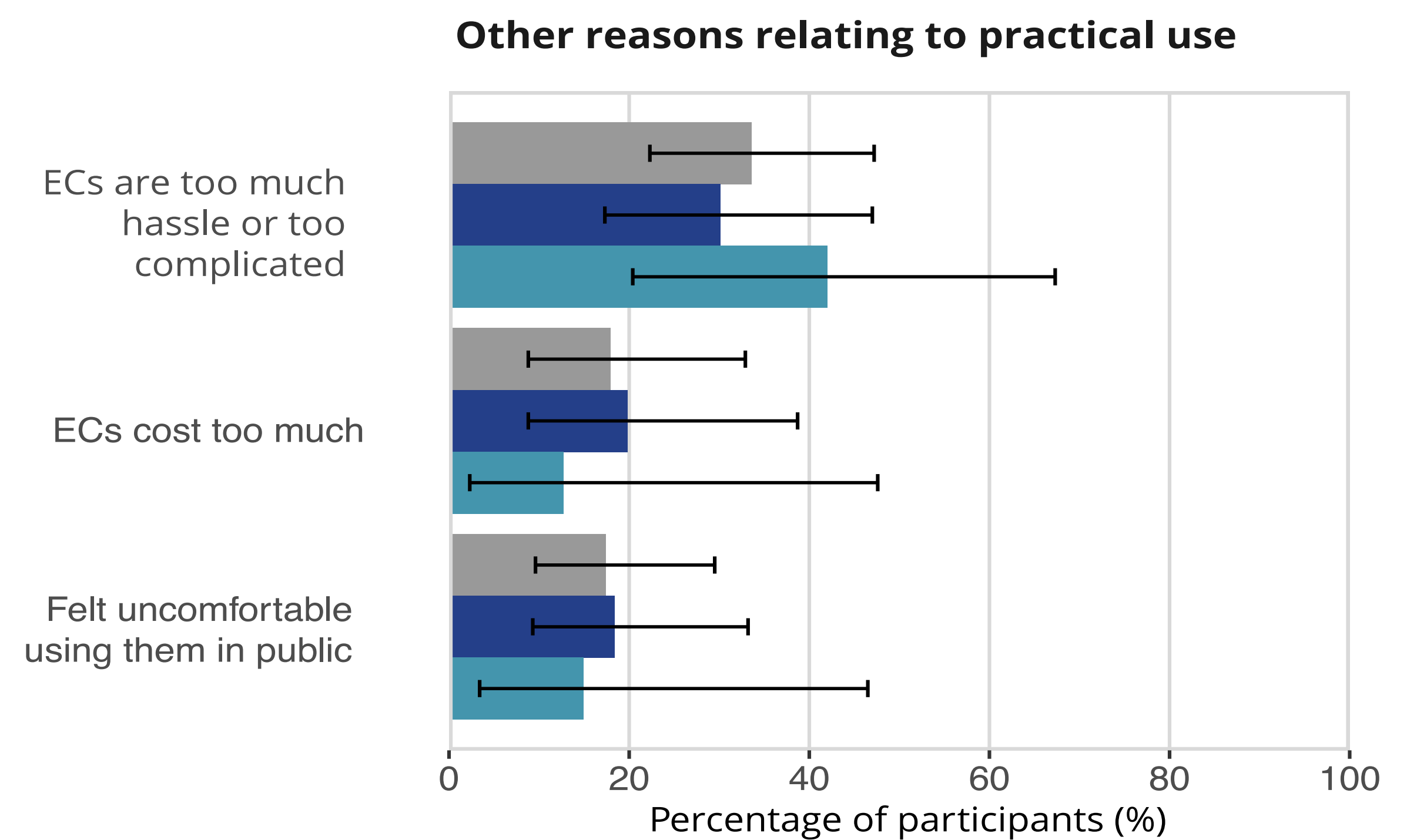
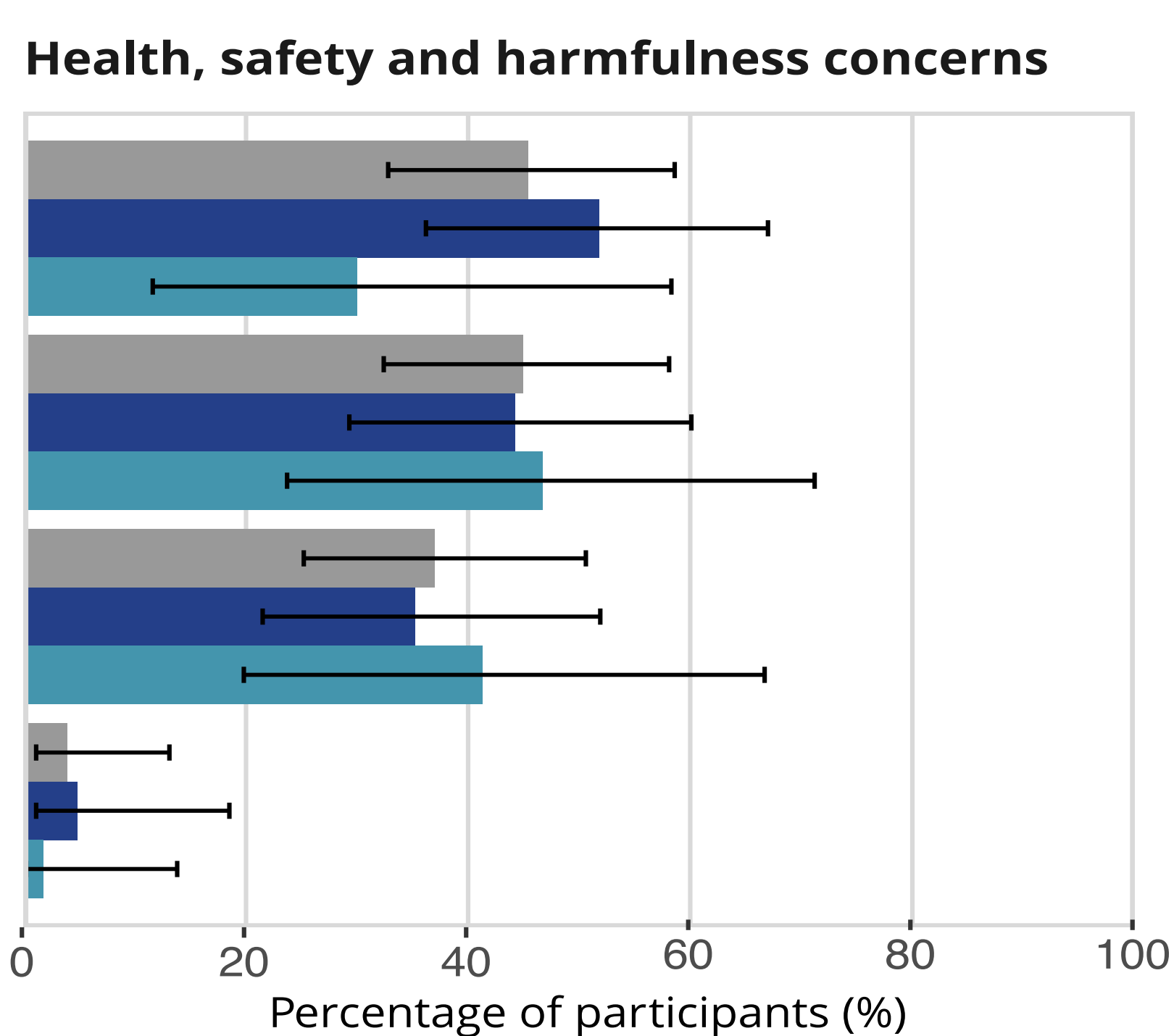
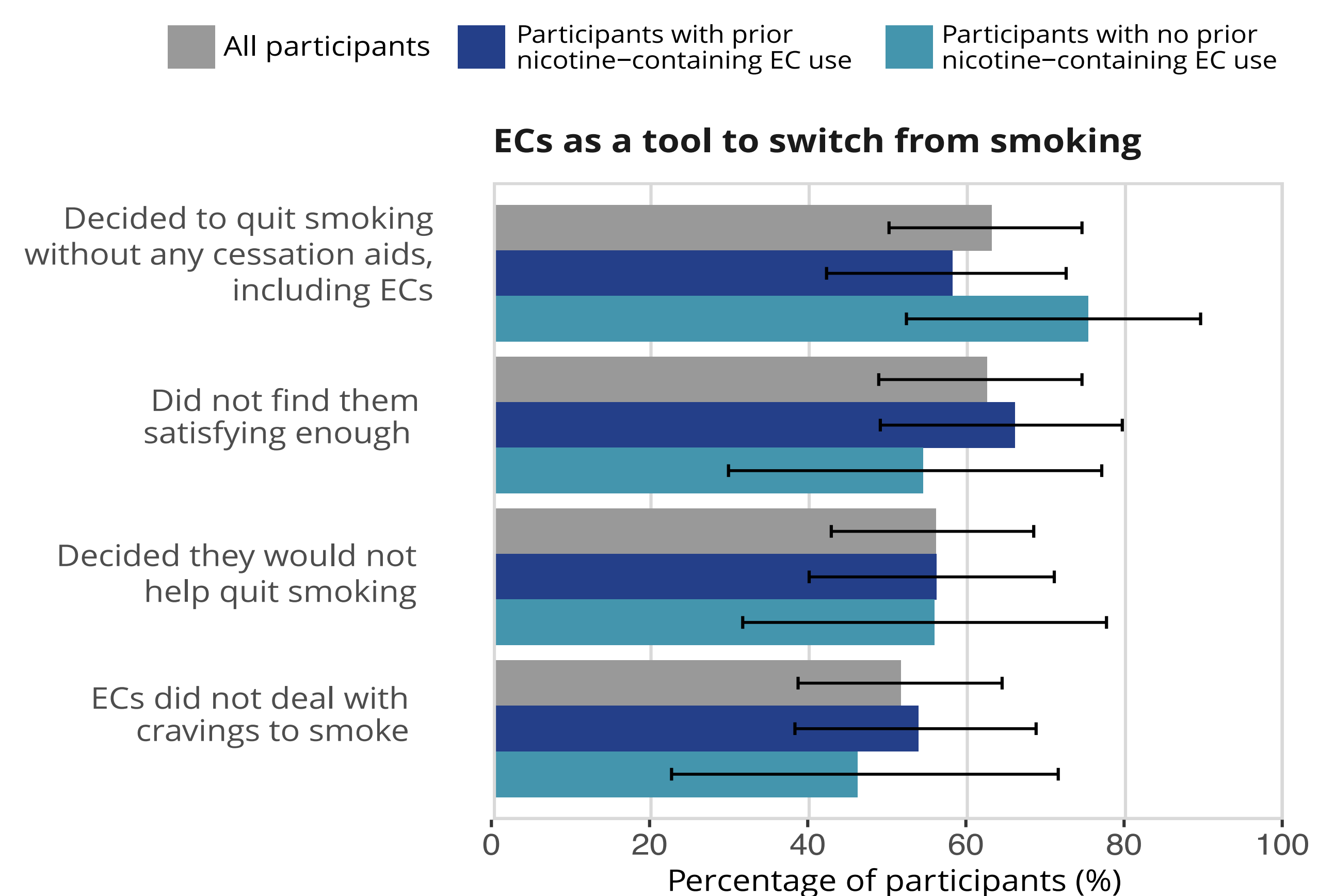
- CATI interview data from Wave 2 (W2, Jul-Dec 2018) of the International Tobacco Control (ITC) NZ Survey
- Participants were smokers who at W2 reported EC use in the past 12 months but who stated that they were no longer using ECs (n = 131, including 63 Māori, the indigenous peoples of NZ).
- Eligible participants responded to 11 different statements about reasons for discontinuing EC use.
- Analyses are weighted so that estimates reflect the NZ adult smoking population.

Results

The most common reasons for stopping EC use amongst participants was deciding to quit smoking without any cessation aids at all instead (63.1%) and not finding them to be satisfying enough (62.5%).

Reasons	% of all participants (n = 131)
ECs as a tool to switch from smoking	
Decided to quit smoking without any cessation aids, including ECs	63.1 (50.1, 74.5)
Did not find them satisfying enough	62.5 (48.8, 74.5)
Decided they would not help quit smoking	56.0 (42.8, 68.4)
ECs did not deal with cravings to smoke	51.6 (38.6, 64.4)
Health, safety and harmfulness concerns	
Concerned ECs may be harmful	45.4 (32.8, 58.6)
Concerned about safety of using ECs	44.9 (32.4, 58.1)
Wanted to stop using nicotine completely	37.0 (25.2, 50.6)
Felt was becoming addicted to vaping	3.9 (1.1, 13.1)
Other reasons relating to practical use	
ECs are too much hassle or too complicated	33.6 (22.3, 47.2)
ECs cost too much	17.9 (8.8, 32.9)
Felt uncomfortable using them in public	17.4 (9.6, 29.5)

*Categorisation of eligible ex-EC users into prior or no prior nicotine-containing EC use was based off responses to survey questions that asked about any nicotine-containing EC use in the past 12 months. 8 eligible participants could not be classified.



Conclusions

People switching from smoking to vaping need clear advice about suitable EC devices and e-liquid nicotine levels. Smokers that try ECs may need to be encouraged to persist with vaping and manage expectations.

Funding & Acknowledgements

The ITC NZ Project was supported by grants from the Health Research Council of New Zealand (GA215F 15/072) and Canadian Institutes of Health Research (FDN-148477). We acknowledge support of the Ministry of Health NZHS team (access to NZHS participants) and Research NZ (data collection). Additional support is provided to GTF from a Senior Investigator Grant from the Ontario Institute for Cancer Research. The ITC NZ Survey is part of the ITC Project led by the University of Waterloo. Thanks also to Luke Pilkinton-Ching, University of Otago, Wellington, for the graphic design of this poster.

Disclosures/Conflict of Interest

GTF has served as an expert witness on behalf of governments in litigation involving the tobacco industry. All other authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

Contacts

Contact: Maddie White (maddie.white@otago.ac.nz)

