

PERCEPTIONS OF VAPING AMONG SMOKERS AND NON-SMOKERS



INTRODUCTION

- Switching completely from smoking to vaping may reduce the health risks smokers would otherwise face.
 - However, smokers may have misperceptions of vaping that deter them from making this switch.
- Vaping uptake by non-smokers may increase the health risks they would face, relative to remaining smoke-free and vape-free.
 - Non-smokers who mis-understand these risks may begin vaping.

RESEARCH AIM

- To investigate how smokers and non-smokers perceived the risks and benefits of electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) relative to smoked tobacco.

METHODS

- We undertook an online survey sourced from the Dynata panel that comprised:
 - 519 New Zealand smokers (including 270 vapers)
 - 486 non-smokers (including 54 vapers)

Measures

- Attitudes to, and knowledge and perceptions, of ENDS and vaping.
 - Agree-disagree statements and forced-choice questions.

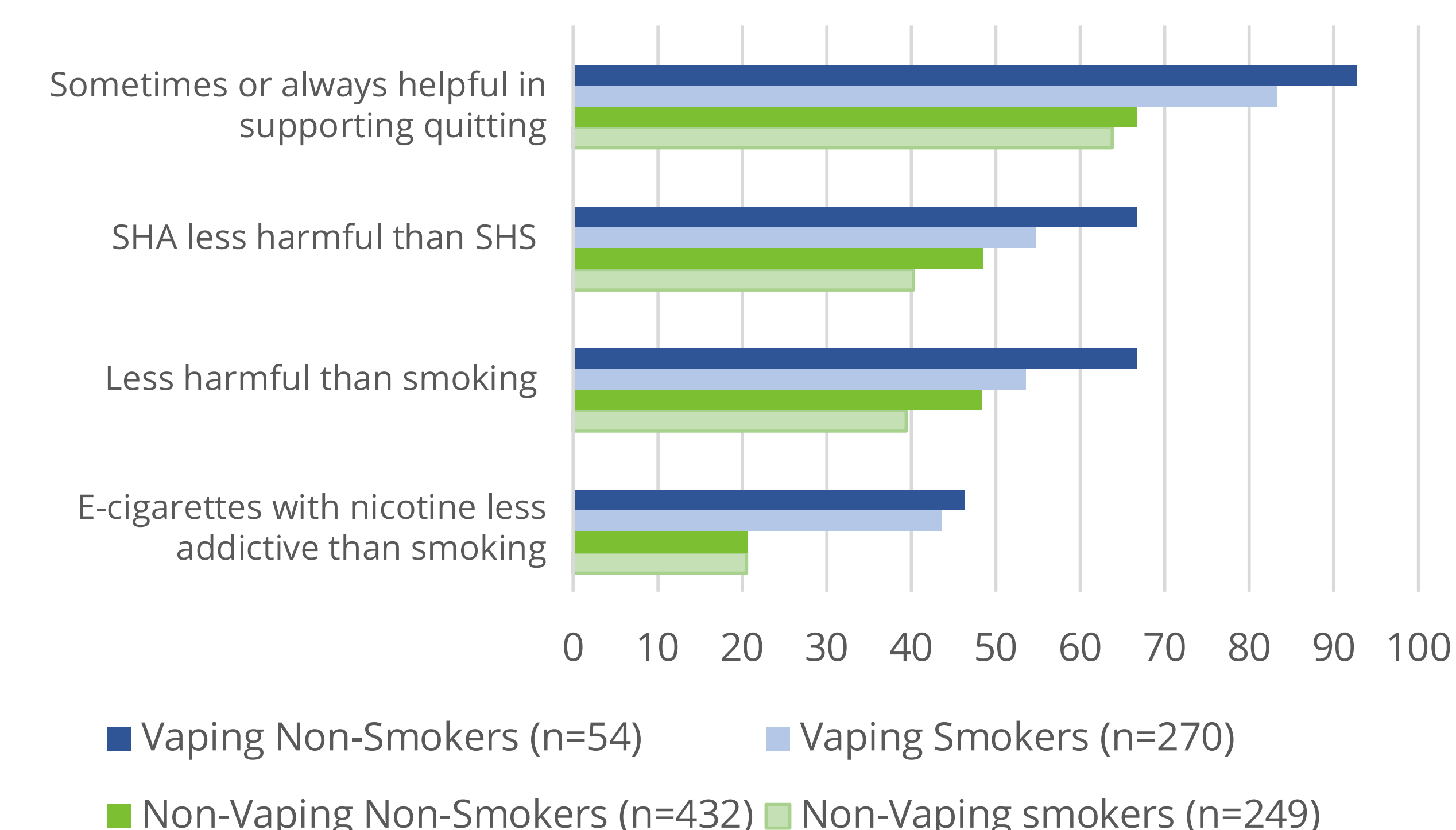
RESULTS

- Vapers were significantly more likely than non-vapers to:
 - Regard ENDS as sometimes or always useful in helping smokers to quit smoking;
 - View second-hand aerosol as less harmful than second-hand smoke;
 - Believe ENDS are less harmful and less addictive than cigarettes.
- Vapers were also significantly more likely than non-vapers to:
 - Think vaping smelled better than smoking;
 - Believe vaping helped smokers quit smoking completely.
- Vaping non-smokers typically had the most positive beliefs about vaping;
 - **BUT** there was high uncertainty among non-vapers (up to 37%).

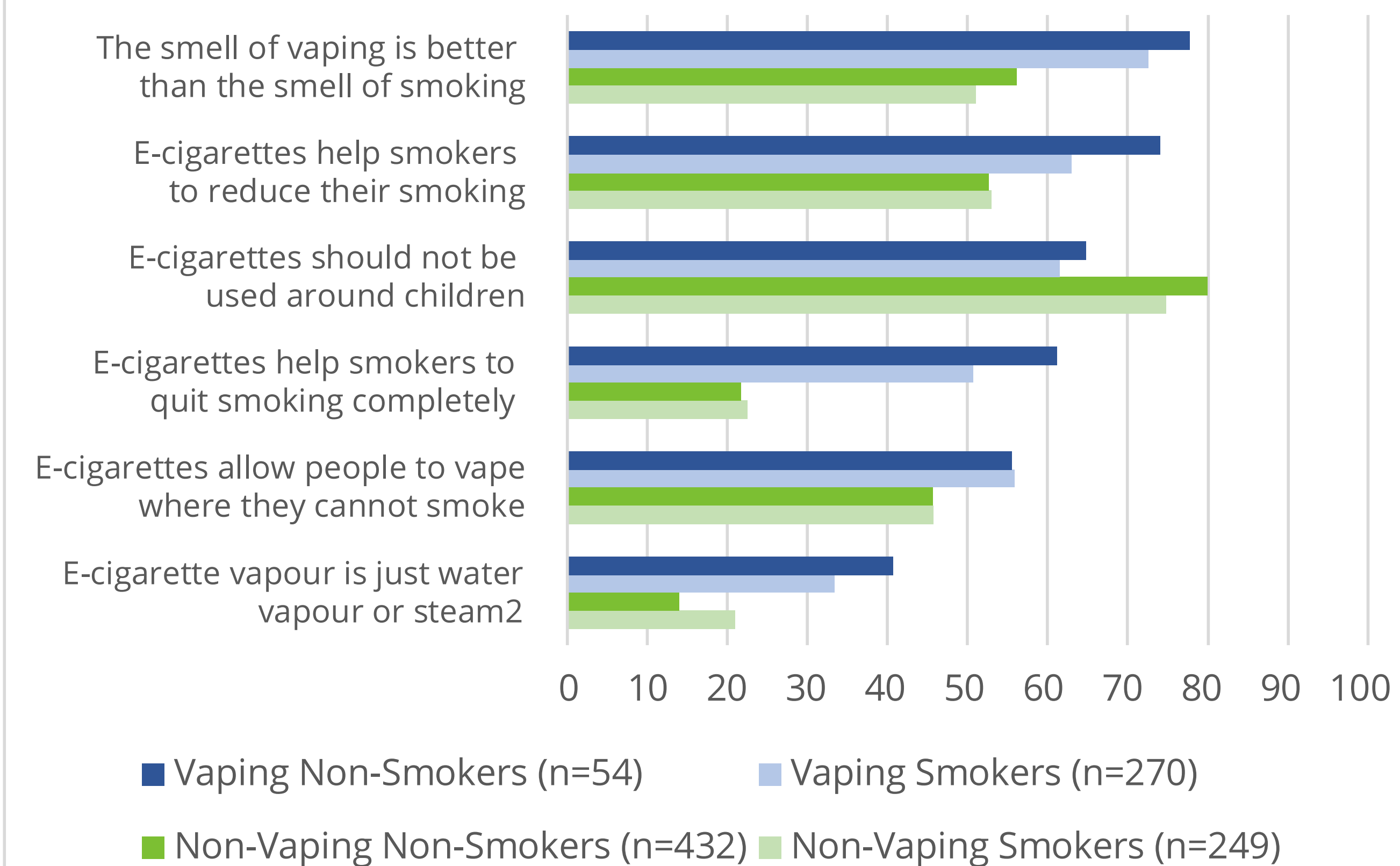
CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

There are no conflicts of interest to report.

Perceptions of Vaping by Vaping and Smoking Status



Beliefs about Vaping and ENDS by Smoking and Vaping Status



CONCLUSIONS

- Vapers had consistently more positive attitudes to ENDS and vaping than non-vapers.
 - No evidence that non-vaping smokers saw ENDS as more risky than smoking;
 - **BUT** less positive attitudes suggest better information about vaping's potential benefits to them could support smoking to vaping transitions.
- Vaping non-smokers had highly positive attitudes to vaping,
 - Stronger interventions may be needed to change these beliefs and deter uptake among groups that will not benefit from ENDS use.

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