



**ASPIRE
AOTEAROA**

Newsletter

Welcome to our latest newsletter. You may have noticed the format has been updated, which reflects several changes at ASPIRE Aotearoa, including completion of our Whakahā o Te Pā Harakeke programme and the introduction of our new Health Research Council funded programme, Te Tupu o te Harakeke (more details on page 3).

We are always keen to hear feedback on how we can best develop our research and communicate our progress with you. Please email us with any suggestions, questions, or ideas at:

aspire.aotearoa@otago.ac.nz

The ASPIRE Aotearoa team.



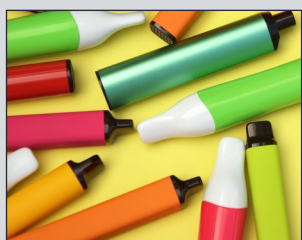
Research snapshots



How have trends in smoking prevalence among 14–15-year-old adolescents changed after the emergence of vaping in Aotearoa?

Find out in a new article, coauthored by Judith McCool and Lucy Hardie.

[Read about it here](#)



As part of the Government's plan to achieve the Smokefree 2025 goal, many stop smoking providers are now offering free vape starter kits.

Calvin Cochran, Janet Hoek, and Jude Ball take a look at what the programme could achieve.

[Read about it here](#)



Australia's new smokefree policies will change tobacco packages and sticks, but could they have gone further?

Take a look at Janet Hoek's Conversation article discussing what Aotearoa could adopt and how we might extend Australia's actions.

[Read about it here](#)





Our new Co-Director



We are extremely pleased to announce that Dr Jude Ball has accepted a position as a Co-Director for ASPIRE Aotearoa, working alongside Co-Directors Professor Janet Hoek and Associate Professor Andrew Waa.

Jude joined ASPIRE Aotearoa in 2014 and has a background in critical psychology, health promotion, and applied research. Jude's expertise and leadership have led to several successful grant applications and an outstanding track record of publishing in very high-quality journals.

She brings a wealth of experience in tobacco and nicotine research, with a special interest in the impact of the changing social context on youth trends, and the inter-relationships between smoking and other risk behaviours in young people.



Research spotlight

Renee Hosking was a summer student at ASPIRE Aotearoa who explored how young people perceived a nicotine-free generation. She worked with Janet Hoek and Anna Graham DeMello to interview young people who assessed themselves as addicted to vaping. Renee particularly enjoyed interviewing participants and felt she "learned something new from each participant, which made the project an enriching and enjoyable experience". She also appreciated the new skills she learned, from planning a study to preparing a final manuscript, while strengthening her interviewing skills and learning more about coding and interpreting data. The project helped fine tune Renee's skills in critically analysing research and she's already thinking about research she might lead in the future.



Renee returned to ASPIRE Aotearoa this year and has just completed her second summer scholarship with us. This year she worked with Jude Ball and Janet Hoek, and completed several smaller studies, which included creating an infographic to return research findings to participants. Renee also analysed secondary data on e-liquid nicotine content using data from ESR; she identified several differences between the nicotine content stated on e-liquid labels and hopes this work, which is currently under review, will inform more accurate labelling in the future. The NZMJ will publish Renee's work in early June. Finally, Renee extended the work she undertook last year by analysing qualitative data from a survey of youth and young adults, and probing how vaping affects their physical, mental, financial, social and spiritual wellbeing.

Although she's now returned to her medical studies, Renee is keen to share her experiences with other students and advises them to "lean into every opportunity offered to you to embrace the experience and take in all the learning you can!"



Research in progress

Te Tupu o te Harakeke programme

This five-year programme is funded by the Health Research Council and includes a range of studies:

- **EASE:** The [EASE study](#) involves surveys of people who smoke or recently stopped smoking. It collects information on patterns of nicotine product use and beliefs about nicotine products. Findings from a previous survey wave were recently published ([here](#) and [here](#)). We are preparing for Wave 6 of the survey, to be launched later this year.
- **LEEP:** The LEEP project investigates the lived experiences of endgame policies through qualitative research interviews. The first project will examine people's experiences of accessing and using illicit tobacco.
- **Te Tikanga o Kaupapa Tupeka Kore:** Our research looks at how Māori values and practices (tikanga) can help guide better rules and policies about smoking and vaping—especially in places where Māori children and young people grow and thrive. The idea of a tobacco-free future (Tupeka Kore) was first proposed by Māori leaders in 2006 as part of a uniquely Māori vision that recognised how deeply tobacco harms whānau—not just their health, but also their social, cultural, and economic wellbeing. Despite this, there's been little research into how tikanga connects with Tupeka Kore in real-world spaces. We want to understand how tikanga can be a positive foundation for shaping tobacco-free policies in the places our pēpē, Tamariki, and rangatahi live, learn and play. Preparation for this project is underway.
- **ACAR:** The ACAR study analyses commercial actors' responses to tobacco and nicotine policy measures, including the introduction of new products. We are monitoring activity we see in international and local media. Our first project involves a collaboration with Johns Hopkins University and will use an AI platform to analyse media coverage of the endgame measures' repeal. We are conscious that many of you may notice new products before we see them. We are keen to learn from you too; please let us know if you've noticed new products or if you have ideas you think we should explore. You can reach us at: aspire.aotearoa@otago.ac.nz.
- **Ka hao te rangatahi:** This project extends the work of Te Hao Hou (outlined below) into Kura Kaupapa Māori. Preparation for this study is underway.

Te Hao Hou: Rangatahi Māori experiences and perceptions of smoking and vaping

Te Hao Hou is funded by a three-year Health Research Council Project Grant and focusses on concerns raised about the high rates of vape use among rangatahi, particularly Rangatahi Māori. The project is focused on 1) Raising Rangatahi Māori voices in decision-making around tobacco and vaping policies, through hui and a monitored online platform, 2) Understanding young people's experiences of being exposed to vaping and how they interpret vaping, through qualitative interviews, and 3) Investigating the evolution of progression to vaping, through quantitative surveys. Preparation for these studies is underway.

Other projects

We have a wide range of smaller studies underway, including an [analysis of New Zealand Health Survey data](#) and an appraisal of New Zealand's system for monitoring youth drug use. Several studies focus on nicotine product use among young people and its impacts, for example a study investigating the proportion of secondary students who are worried about their smoking or vaping and want to quit. We also have a qualitative study on young people's experiences with and views on oral nicotine products such as Zyn, and a quantitative study with 16-29 year olds about the positive and negative impacts of vaping on their physical, social, and mental wellbeing.

We are also contributing to several research collaborations, including the CREATE project (a [Tobacco endgames scoping study](#) and [Tobacco endgames expert interview study](#)) and work with French colleagues to explore impediments to effective tobacco control policy in France, including tobacco industry interference. ASPIRE Aotearoa is also part of a new collaboration between the University of Otago and the Cancer Society that supports research in a range of areas including tobacco. Our contribution focuses on monitoring tobacco industry interference in policymaking.



Research outputs

Journal publications

- Hoek J, Hosking R, Graham-DeMello A, Sanders C, Teddy L, Ball J, van der Eijk Y, Gallopel-Morvan K. Removing or returning freedom? Views on a nicotine-free generation policy held by young people from aotearoa who use electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS). Tobacco Control. 2025 Feb 4.
- Kim H, Gartner C, Edwards R, Puljević C, Morphett K, Kim DH, Chun HR, Ekdahl M, Kang H. Public Support for Tobacco Endgame Policies: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis. Nicotine & tobacco research. 2025 Mar 24;27(4):586-97.
- Maddox R, Waa A, Calma T, Whop LJ. Oversimplification of a complex public health issue that serves exploitative industry interests. Addiction. 2025.
- McGlinchy B, Smith M, Gurtner M, D'Souza A, Hoek J, Signal L. Clearing the haze: novel methodology objectively assessing children's online exposure to tobacco and vape marketing. Health promotion international. 2025 Apr;40(2):daae193.
- Nip J, Stanley J, Zhang J, Waa A, Ball J, Tautolo E, Johnson E, Agar TK, Quah ACK, Fong GT, Edwards R. Support for and likely impacts of endgame measures in the Smokefree Aotearoa Action Plan: findings from the 2020–2021 International Tobacco Control New Zealand (EASE) surveys. New Zealand Medical Journal. 2025 Jan 24; 138(1608).
- Nip J, Zhang J, Stanley J, Waa A, Ball J, Tautolo ES, Agar TK, Quah AC, Fong GT, Edwards R. Patterns and experiences of smoking, electronic cigarettes (vapes) and heated tobacco use among people who smoke or who recently quit. The New Zealand medical journal. 2025 Mar 28;138(1612):21-46.
- Waa A, Calma T. Stories, Sovereignty, and Smoking Cessation: Indigenous Perspectives. Nicotine and Tobacco Research. 2025 Mar;27(3):367-8.

Presentations

- Ball J. Hooked – What we know about vaping among youth in Aotearoa, Health Coalition Aotearoa online webinar, New Zealand, 2025.
- DeMello A, Gegan M, Waa A, Hoek J. Aotearoa New Zealand's "endgame" legislation: A Critical Analysis of the Hansard Repeal Debate Using the Policy Dystopia Model Policy. Podium presentation, SRNT Conference, New Orleans, 2025.
- Edwards R. Introduction and repeal of the Smokefree Legislation in New Zealand - What lessons can we learn? Australian Lung Cancer Conference, Adelaide Convention Centre, Adelaide, 2025.
- Edwards R. Introduction and repeal of the Smokefree Legislation in New Zealand - What lessons can we learn? The Thoracic Society of Australia and New Zealand and the Australian and New Zealand Society of Respiratory Science conference, Adelaide Convention Centre, Adelaide, 2025.
- Gendall P, Hoek J. Estimating the impact of efficacy inserts on people who smoke from Aotearoa New Zealand Policy. Podium presentation, SRNT Conference, New Orleans, March 11-15 2025.
- Hoek J. Environnements sans fumée et politiques de « tobacco endgame » : Quelques expériences de la Nouvelle-Zélande. Ministère de la Santé, Paris, 08 octobre, 2024.



Research outputs continued

Presentations continued

- Hoek J. Le lobbying de l'industrie du tabac et l'histoire des tobacco endgame politiques en Aotearoa, Nouvelle-Zélande. Institut de Cancere, Paris, 19 novembre 2024.
- Hoek J. Qu'est-ce qui se passe en Nouvelle-Zélande? Un leader mondial et puis...?? Comite Nationale Contre le Tabagisme, Paris, 20 novembre 2024.
- Hoek J. Nouvelle-Zélande, leader mondial en matière de lutte antitabac: Vraiment? Unisante, Lausanne, 21 janvier, 2025.
- Hoek J. Innovation and tobacco policy: Some experiences from Aotearoa New Zealand. La Fondation Contre le Cancer, Brussels, 28 janvier, 2025.
- Hoek J. Le lobbying de l'industrie du tabac contre le tobacco endgame en Nouvelle-Zélande. Marketing et Lobbying du tabac : Comment lutter ? Colloque, EHSS, Paris, 19 février 2025.
- Hoek J. Vapotage parmi les jeunes: Quelques recherches de Nouvelle-Zélande. Webinaire, École des hautes études en santé publique, Université de Rennes, 23 February 2025.
- Hoek J. An international endgame experience: The case of Aotearoa New Zealand. The Thoracic Society of Australia and New Zealand and the Australian and New Zealand Society of Respiratory Science conference, 21 - 25 March 2025, Adelaide Convention Centre, Adelaide.
- Hoek J, Gendall P, Eckert C, Burke P. An Evaluation of Tobacco Pack Efficacy inserts: Two Discrete Choice Studies from Aotearoa New Zealand. Poster, SRNT Conference, New Orleans, March 11-15 2025.
- Morphett K, Holland A, Kang H, Hefler M, Puljevic C, Trigg J, Hoek J, Edwards R, Canty R, Gartner C. A systematic review and synthesis of qualitative research on stakeholder views on tobacco endgame policies. Poster, SRNT Conference, New Orleans, March 11-15 2025.
- Otieno L, Sallows G, Trigg J, Pettigrew S, Jongenelis M, Hides L, Hoek J, Woolfenden S, Smith J, Dono J, Ullah S, Edwards R, Guillaumier A, Dowden-Parker S, Bowden J, Miller C, Bonevski B. Theoretical Frameworks in Youth Communication on Nicotine Vaping Products and tobacco: A Systematic Review. Poster, SRNT Conference, New Orleans, March 11-15 2025.
- Trigg J, Otieno L, Dowden-Parker S, Cardamone E, Johnson B, Sallows G, Pettigrew S, Jongenelis M, Hides L, Hoek J, Woolfenden S, Smith J, Dono J, Ullah S, Edwards R, Guillaumier A, Bowden J, Miller C, Bonevski B. Australian Youth Attitudes and Decisions about Nicotine vaping: A Vignette Focused Qualitative Study of Experiences. Poster, SRNT Conference, New Orleans, March 11-15 2025.

Articles and blogs

- <https://www.phcc.org.nz/briefing/slight-drop-youth-vaping-stark-ethnic-disparities-remain>
- <https://theconversation.com/we-asked-young-people-if-they-wanted-tighter-vaping-regulation-to-phase-out-nicotine-heres-what-they-said-249456>
- <https://theconversation.com/australias-innovative-new-policies-are-designed-to-cut-smoking-rates-here-are-6-ideas-nz-could-borrow-253717>