

Webinar: Nicotine pouches & youth - latest evidence from the Generation Vape study

Tara Guckel: So, hi everyone, and welcome to the Positive Choices webinar series. My name is Tara Guckel, and I work at the Matilda Centre for Research in Mental Health and Substance Use at the University of Sydney on the Positive Choices team. So welcome, and thank you very much for joining us today.

So we're all coming together from different parts of the country today, and I'd like to begin by acknowledging the traditional custodians of country throughout Australia and their connection to land, water, and community. I'm currently on the lands of the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation, and I pay my respects to their elders past and present. And I further acknowledge the traditional owners of the lands on which you are joining us from, and pay my respects to their elders past and present. And I'd also like to acknowledge any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are joining us today.

So, just a little bit of housekeeping. So, as some of you might have already joined our webinars before, but for those who are new, as participants, you're currently on listen-only mode, which means that we'll not be able to hear or see you. We are recording the session, and you'll receive a follow-up email with a link to the recording once it's available. And we'll also have time for a Q&A session at the end of the webinar, so as the session progresses, feel free to add your questions to the Q&A box.

And if you're new to Positive Choices, let me give you a quick introduction. Positive Choices is a website that provides access to trusted, evidence-based alcohol and other drug information and educational resources suitable for parents, school staff, and students. We're funded by the Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, and our resources are developed by the Matilda Centre for Research in Mental Health and Substance Use, in collaboration with teachers, parents, and students. Some examples of resources housed on Positive Choices include fact sheets, videos, webinars like these, games, and classroom-based drug and alcohol prevention programs. And I encourage you to take a look at our website and have a look at these resources if you're not familiar.

But now, onto why we're all here today. So we're really lucky to be joined by Emily, Ciara and Lauren, who are going to be presenting for us on nicotine pouches in youth. Emily is project lead in the Tobacco Control Unit at Cancer Council New South Wales, and she's the project manager for Generation Vape, a national research project exploring vaping among young people in Australia, and she leads the e-cigarette policy and advocacy initiative at both a state and federal level.

Ciara is the project specialist in the Tobacco Control Unit, and in her current role, she supports the project management of the National Generation Vape Research Project.

And Lauren is a Senior Project Officer with New South Wales Health, and has extensive experience accessing both federal and state... across both federal and state government. She's successfully led and implemented a range of strategic policies and projects aimed at improving cancer outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. And more recently, she's been working on e-cigarette and tobacco control.

Thank you very much for joining us today, we're really lucky, and I'll hand over to you.

Emily Jenkinson: Thanks, Tara. Hi, everyone. We're just gonna share our screen quickly, so we can share some slides. Thank you, Ciara. Perfect. Okay. So hi everyone, thank you so much for coming along to the webinar today. We're really excited to be presenting today in collaboration with the team at Positive Choices, as well as the New South Wales Ministry of Health on an important but emerging issue that is nicotine pouches.

So as Tara mentioned, my name's Emily Jenkinson, and I'm presenting today with Ciara Madigan from Cancer Council New South Wales, and hopefully we can answer some of your, give you a bit of background on what nicotine pouches are, who's behind them, and some of the evidence that's coming out of our study, Generation Vape.

So before we begin, I'd also like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land that we're living and working on. So for me today, that's the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation, and I'd like to pay my respects to Elders past and present, and extend that respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people present today.

So, a bit of an overview as to what we're going to try and cover in today's presentations. We've got 60 minutes with you all, including some time at the end for Q&A.

So we're gonna start with a bit of background on the current tobacco and nicotine product landscape, before we get into explaining what nicotine pouches are, the potential health impacts, and then we'll move on to sharing some findings from the Generation Vape study.

Ciara's going to take us through the development process for a suite of new resources on Nicotine pouches for young people, parents, and teachers, before handing over to Lauren from the Ministry of Health to share the final resources and some information from the team there as well.

And finishing off, we'll hopefully have some time, at the end for a Q&A session to answer any and all of your burning questions. So, thank you, Ciara. Next slide.

Okay, so over the past three decades, Australia has achieved historically low smoking rates, particularly among young people. And that success has created a fundamental challenge for the tobacco industry. Cigarettes remain the industry's most profitable product, but traditional cigarette... the traditional cigarette market is shrinking.

So to secure future growth, major tobacco companies have increasingly diversified into what they call next-generation nicotine products. So, that includes things like e-cigarettes, heated tobacco products, and more recently, nicotine pouches, which is presenting a bit of a new challenge for us in public health.

So what are nicotine pouches? They're commonly referred to, often by their brand names, so, pouches or zyns, and they're small white bags that contain chemicals and flavourings with varying amounts of nicotine, depending on the product and the brand.

So they're similar to tobacco snus pouches, which are common in Scandinavian countries, and they're designed to be placed between the lip and the gum to deliver a direct hit of nicotine straight through the bloodstream.

So what makes these products different is not just the nicotine that they contain, but how they are designed and marketed. So, they're quite discreet, they're flavoured, I think one of the latest flavoured products we saw was Peach Bellini.

They're easy to conceal, and they can be used virtually anywhere. So all of these features make them particularly appealing to young people and non-smokers, just like vaping products.

According to the latest National Drug Strategy Household Survey data from 2025, use of nicotine pouches was highest among young people aged 18 to 24 years. So, in 2025, we had 8.4% of 18-24 year olds, and 0.9% of 14-17 year olds reporting using nicotine pouches.

The 2025 survey was actually the first time nicotine pouches were reported separately, and highlights the need to monitor emerging products and their use among young people.

So, who's behind nicotine pouches? So, pouches are not emerging in isolation, they're actually part of a rapidly expanding global market that's now dominated by some of the world's largest tobacco companies, including Philip Morris International, who own the pouch brand Zyn, and British American Tobacco, who own Velo.

Global sales have grown dramatically in recent years, with tens of billions of pouches sold annually. And since 2020, global nicotine pouch sales have increased by 660%, so reflecting the latest chapter in the evolution of the nicotine industry. So at the same time, regulation in many countries has struggled to keep up with the pace and the speed of this market growth.

So what is the situation in Australia? So, we're quite lucky in Australia. We have really strong laws that prohibit the advertising and sale of nicotine pouches. However, enforcement remains a challenge.

So despite it being illegal, these products are still reaching young people through illegal importation and sales, highlighting the gap that can exist between legislation and real-world access.

And we've got in the purple box here just, some more information that if you suspect a retailer in your community is selling nicotine pouches or vapes, or any other sort of illegal tobacco product,

you can report them to either New South Wales Health, if you're based, in New South Wales, or, directly to the TGA, so we've got some information there for reporting.

So, what do we know about the health harms? So nicotine pouches carry a range of short-term health risks, including nicotine addiction and dependence.

Increased heart rate and blood pressure, acute nicotine toxicity and poisoning, sore throat and mouth lesions, headaches and dizziness, oral and dental problems, including periodontal disease, because pouches are being put straight into the mouth and gum.

And for young people, nicotine has established, nicotine impacts, established negative impacts, sorry, on the developing adolescent brain, including impaired learning, memory, and executive function.

So, because nicotine pouches are still relatively new, we don't know what the long-term health effects are yet. So, while the industry might conflate that lack of data with the lack of data showing the harm with harm reduction, the truth is that the potential long-lasting health harms are unknown and will continue to, unfold.

So why are we concerned? There's several reasons. So, these products are often designed to appeal to young people with their colourful packaging, attractive branding, and their range of flavours.

They're heavily promoted through social media and digital marketing, using many of the same tactics that we've seen successfully drive youth uptake of other nicotine products, like vaping.

Nicotine itself is highly addictive, and early exposure can increase the risk of long-term dependence. And while nicotine pouches are sometimes marketed as a safer alternative to smoking, their long-term health effects remain unknown, because they're still quite new, and the evidence is emerging.

There's also growing concern about young people using pouches alongside vapes and cigarettes, so we call this, poly-product use, and that increases their overall nicotine exposure, and it can lead to dependence and, those other health impacts as well.

And ultimately, these products represent the latest effort by the nicotine industry to recruit and retain a new generation of nicotine users.

So, to give you a sense of how nicotine pouches are being marketed, we've put together a bit of a collage here of some real-world examples. So, if you're a Formula One fan, or you've ever watched Drive to Survive on Netflix, you've probably already seen brands like Zyn and Velo.

So these nicotine pouch brands feature prominently on the cars, on the driver uniforms, on the trackside advertising, and although direct tobacco advertising is heavily restricted, tobacco companies continue to maintain a presence in elite sport through so-called next-gen, sort of, nicotine products, like pouches.

The examples on this slide also show some celebrity endorsements and influencer marketing. So, celebrities, like, we've got on there, in the middle, the Jonas Brothers, Post Malone, Diplo, they've been associated with nicotine pouch products.

While social media influencers actively promote daily use to their followers. So, in the top right, and in the middle there, it's an influencer, called the Pouch Princess,

You might have seen her, but one of the posts there in the top right is claiming that nicotine pouches can help suppress appetite, which is a particularly concerning message for young people.

In the bottom right of this collage, you can see actress and director Lena Dunham promoting Zyn to millions of followers during the Met Gala, so one of the world's most visible cultural events. She had a Zyn, in her... a lot of her photos and in her purse.

So, while these examples might look quite different, they all serve the same purpose, and that's to make nicotine use appear normal, fashionable, and socially acceptable.

This is, just an example of how the nicotine industry is reaching new consumers, particularly young people. And why products like nicotine pouches, raise such concern for public health.

So you've heard about what nicotine pouches are, the companies behind them, and their potential health harms, and how they're being promoted to young people, but we're now going to move on to sharing some of the findings from Generation Vape, and the insights we've gained on nicotine pouch use among young people in Australia.

So before I share our findings on nicotine pouches, I'd just like to briefly introduce Generation Vape. So, Gen Vape is Australia's largest research study examining vaping, tobacco, and nicotine use among young people aged 14 to 24 years.

It's a study led by Cancer Council New South Wales, in partnership with the Daffodil Centre and the University of Sydney, and the study is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, New South Wales Ministry of Health, and Cancer Institute, New South Wales.

Gen Vape combines surveys, focus groups, and interviews to track changes in young people's attitudes and behaviours over time, and we collect our data through surveys every 6 months, and through qualitative research every 12 months, and we've been running it since 2021.

So while Gen Vape was originally established to understand the rise in vaping among young people, as we know, the nicotine market is constantly shifting and evolving, and as new products, like nicotine pouches have emerged, our research has expanded to examine their awareness, use, and appeal among young Australians.

So today's findings focus on what we've learned about nicotine pouches from our surveys, with close to 9,000 young people aged 14 to 17, and over 7,000 young adults aged 18 to 24.

And then on the right there, you can see that we're also drawing on some data we collected from our focus groups and interviews with nearly 200 teens and 225 young adults. So, Ciara, I'm going to pass on to you to talk us through some of the findings. Thanks.

Ciara Madigan: Thanks, Em, and hi, everyone. I'm really looking forward to running through some of the top-line findings for our young people cohort and our young adults from Generation Vape.

So, firstly, for our young people aged 14 to 17 years, around 2% of participants in each wave of Generation Vape said they had used nicotine pouches, while over 96% said that they had not, and around 2% said they were unsure.

So, of those who had ever used an oral nicotine pouch, they were asked how often they used nicotine pouches. And so, as you can see here on the slide, this significantly reduced, the sample, so it was around 60 participants each wave.

The most common response across waves was, I have only tried nicotine pouches at 47.4% in wave 8 and 36.3% in wave 7. And this indicated that most use remained experimental among this age range, which is great.

So then we move on to our qualitative results for young people. So, in our, interviews and focus groups, most teenagers had heard of nicotine pouches, and their use of these products was very mixed.

So, for those who had tried them, many did report having negative experiences, and described feeling nauseous or vomiting, burning gums came up a bit, and also numbing feeling in the mouth.

Curiosity was a main reason for trying pouches, but most young people indicated that they were unlikely to continue this use, as they disliked the sensation from having large levels of nicotine in their body.

And then, for reasons for use, the interest to try nicotine pouches was mixed, with some turned off by others' negative experiences, and, others were intrigued to try a new nicotine product.

So, the discrete nature of these products was a key reason for use, given that they can be concealed, in an individual's mouth and do not give any odour off, like a vape would.

Others suggested that reasons for use, included the perception that pouches have a higher nicotine content than vapes, providing head spins that some desired, and were no longer experimenting from Vape... Experiencing from vapes, and pouches were also seen as a cessation aid among some of the young people as well.

So, now we will move on to our young adults results. So, all of the young adults were asked, have you ever used an oral nicotine pouch, such as Zyn or Velo? And use of oral nicotine pouches remained relatively stable between waves 7 and 8, with no statistically significant differences.

So, in both waves, the majority of participants reported never having used a pouch, so 84.3%, while a small proportion, 13% in wave 7 and 14.8% in wave 8, indicated that they had tried them. And also, the current smokers in this, survey were also asked which nicotine products they currently smoke or use, either regularly or occasionally across waves 6 to 8. And of those people, in Wave 8, 21.9% had used nicotine pouches, which was an increase from 16.3% back when this option was first added to this question in Wave 6. And then, of those young adults who had ever used an oral nicotine pouch, they were also asked how often they use nicotine pouches.

So the usage patterns remained consistent between waves 7 and 8, and the majority, reported minimal use, with nearly half, so 47.6%, saying they had only tried nicotine pouches.

And now, we will move on to the qual results. So, young adults were asked about their experiences and their knowledge in relation to nicotine pouches within the focus group discussions. And it was common among majority of young adults to have either tried or maybe observed other people, using these products.

So many shared personal experiences of using these products, mostly describing as negative experiences, so similar to young people, you know, describing an intense feeling or not enjoyable, causing, vomiting, nausea, or a burning feeling. And people

were also highly concerned around the oral health and gum damage, to the point that that kind of turned them off using the products altogether.

So, the first quote here on the slide, I was sitting in my uni lecture the other day, and I would say maybe, like, 75% of people had a packet next to their computer, like they would a drink bottle in class. This really highlights how common, seeing nicotine pouches was becoming within the community for our young adults.

And then for the reasons for use, so the positives of nicotine pouch use included pouches being seen as discreet and effective in relieving the cravings for nicotine.

But also the unpleasant side effects generally ruled them out as an everyday substitute for most young adults. So, a very small number of participants said they had used them to quit vaping, or maybe they knew someone who had done this as well.

And the quote in the purple box here on the slide, highlights a personal experience of a young adult using Zyns whilst sucking their thumb, like a vape, in order to cut down or quit their vaping.

So, to sum up our findings from Generation Vape, the use among teens is still low, and young adults' use is gradually increasing, so education and resources focusing on these products alongside policy and enforcement is a really important part of preventing future uptake.

So, we have used Generation Vape Findings to inform, the New South Wales Health Vape Toolkit expansion, to include new nicotine pouch fact sheets, which I'll, now take you guys all through.

So, I'm sure most of you may have seen, the New South Wales Health Vape Toolkit pictured on the left here on the slide. So, these fact sheets for the initial vaping Toolkit project were created back in 2021,

And that was through a partnership between New South Wales Health, Cancer Council New South Wales, and the New South Wales Department of Education, with the creative design agency Gatecrasher.

So the toolkit, filled the evidence and knowledge gap in New South Wales, and has since expanded over the past few years, acting as a central evidence-based location for all things vaping and youth in Australia... In New South Wales, sorry.

And the emergence of nicotine pouches in Australian research, like Generation Vape, and on the ground in our communities, also led to nicotine pouches being a focus area in New South Wales.

So the aim of this project was to expand the toolkit to include 3 new fact sheets focusing on nicotine pouches as a product, and these were tailored to young people aged 12 to 16 years, parents and carers, and also teachers in schools.

So you can see here, a quick snapshot... a snapshot of the, timeline for the project. So, we did kick this off back in July 2025, with the aim of wrapping everything up before the school term kicked off in early 2026.

So, one of the first things we did, was review existing resources and literature to understand what existed in Australia and internationally, as well as understanding the research on what nicotine pouches are, what are their health harms, and what are some key facts.

So, from our environmental scan, we evaluated the existing resources based on their content, language, format, and reliability. And we found 44 resources in total, with 16 from Australia and New South Wales, 4 from New South Wales.

So you can see that a lot of the New South Wales and Australian resources were in a web page format rather than a fact sheet. And we did see some great international examples that helped to inform some of the key messaging and design look and feel.

However, overall, most resources were aimed at the general public, with very few designed for young people, parents, or teachers.

And given that nicotine pouches were a relatively new product, most of the resources were created in the past two years, highlighting that we needed to create some more resources, with the most up-to-date information around nicotine pouches.

And for the literature review component, the team conducted a desktop literature scan with about 40 different sources, highlighting four key themes. So, what are nicotine pouches? What are the health harms, what support and cessation pathways exist, and what are the laws and regulations in Australia.

So while the evidence on Nicotine pouches was still growing, there was really strong evidence that we wanted to include in these fact sheets.

So, alongside, the literature review and environmental scan, we really did want to make sure that stakeholder consultation was a key component of the fact sheet development to ensure that these fact sheets were filling the gap in New South Wales.

So, initial stakeholder consultation took place back in September 2025, to uncover what key topics and themes the fact sheet should focus on. So, a range of key stakeholders were approached via email, and they were asked some questions relating to any planned nicotine patch activities or initiatives? What helpful resources have they come across? Is there key questions they would like answered in a fact sheet? And what are the best methods for engaging our three key audiences? So the insights from this consultation was really valuable and shaped the basis of the key messaging.

So, to be consistent with the initial, fact sheets developed back in 2021 that was on a previous slide, the team again partnered with the creative design agency Gatecrasher.

And the Gatecrasher were so familiar with the project, the brand guidelines, and they continued the use of the core audience colours of fuchsia pink for the young people, orange for parents and carers, and then the purple for teachers, for consistency.

So, Gatecrasher also introduced three tones of variation among the core audience colours, as you can see here on the slide, to further break up the themed content.

And you may remember, the Vaping toolkit fact sheets, featured a light green background with those same audience colours. However, in order to future-proof the toolkit, we did decide on using a light blue background colour to represent nicotine pouches as a product.

And this will allow New South Wales Health to continue building upon this toolkit in the future, if there's any other new nicotine products that might emerge. And the team decided on an elevated look and feel, and that included updated iconography, imagery over icons on the header, and also using boxes to separate those key messaging themes. And in terms of key messaging, so we did use, initial stakeholder consultation insights. Along with Gen Vape research findings, findings from the Environmental Scan and Literature Review, to develop key messaging for these fact sheets. So, the themes really focused in on what nicotine pouches are, what are the known health harms.

What's the legal status in Australia? What are the signs of addiction? What is the appeal to young people? And also, all fact sheets ended with where to get quit support. So these key messages were added into draft fact sheets, and were shared with key stakeholders for review. So, those stakeholders included New South Wales Health, the New South Wales Health Department of Education, PNC Federation NSW, and also the Advocate for Children Young People.

And excitingly, we did get 10 members of the Advocates Youth Advisory Committee to review the draft fact sheets using a feedback form. So the feedback from these stakeholders focused on the flow of the fact sheet content, which was so helpful. So, that included, starting with health harms and legal status, and finishing with signs of addiction and some quit support options.

So, these feedback and insights from our key stakeholders really did inform the fact sheets and make sure that they were fit for purpose, usable, and stayed connected to the original New South Wales Vaping Toolkit. And once all feedback was actioned, and a final review from New South Wales Health, we had our final fact sheets.

Okay, so we've got the transition. And if you haven't seen them yet, here are the final fact sheets, which are now live on the New South Wales Health website. So the team's super thrilled with the final design, layout, and the key messaging.

And we think these fact sheets fill, a major resource gap within New South Wales. So, I'm going to pass on to Lauren now from the New South Wales Health team to go

through, New South Wales Health's approach to addressing Nicotine among young people in New South Wales. So, thanks, Lauren.

Lauren Kinsella: Thanks, Ciara.

Hi, everyone. Yeah, that's a great overview of the development of, the nicotine pouch back sheets. We're really happy with the final product, and have already had lots of positive feedback on the resources. So I just wanted to, start by taking a moment to provide a bit more context on where these resources, fit in our overall approach to nicotine use in young people.

So, New South Wales Health is committed to protecting young people from the harms of nicotine and tobacco use with a strategic, collaborative, and comprehensive approach.

The program of work is centred around, the six pillars that are on the screen. Policy and legislation, regulation and compliance, education and communication. Stakeholder engagement, clinical engagement, and cessation support, and, importantly, research.

So the model is underpinned by the objectives to reduce the availability and appeal of nicotine and tobacco products to young people, whilst also increasing the capacity of young people, parents, school staff, and clinicians to prevent initial uptake, and also to support, cessation.

So, New South Wales Health continues to respond to the rapidly changing landscape of nicotine products. From a regulatory perspective, the retail sale of nicotine pouches is illegal in Australia. Including through convenience stores, tobacconists, supermarkets, and petrol stations. And New South Wales Health actively undertakes compliance and enforcement activities, and also encourages, reports of suspected illegal sales.

So, with the emergence of nicotine pouches, our approach was to focus on prevention, education, and early intervention. So, the goal is to prevent nicotine dependence among our young people.

And raise awareness of the harms associated with nicotine pouches, and actually any nicotine products, and to support young people and their families to make informed decisions about their health.

Next slide, please.

So as Ciara mentioned, the New South Wales Health Vape Toolkit is a suite of evidence-based resources developed to support young people, parents and carers, teachers and

schools, and health professionals with accurate information about vaping, nicotine addiction, quitting support, and the health harms associated with vaping.

So, the toolkit provides practical resources, such as the fact sheets that we've just seen, resources that are tailored to different audiences, videos and educational materials, posters, campaign resources. And also links to cessation support, such as Quitline and the Pave, New South Wales Pave Quit Vaping app.

The toolkit's really important because it translates emerging evidence about vaping into practical, accessible resources that can be used in real-world settings. And it helps to ensure that communities receive consistent evidence-based health information.

From a young person's perspective, the toolkit supports prevention by helping young people to understand the risks associated with vaping and nicotine addiction supports early intervention by helping parents, teachers, and health professionals recognise vaping, and to have informed conversations and provide appropriate support.

And also support cessation by providing practical advice, coping strategies, and pathways to professional support for those who are wanting to quit. The toolkit is reviewed in an ongoing manner. The resources are consistently updated to reflect the latest tobacco, and vaping control reforms, any new, evidence of harms.

And respond to emerging issues, which is why we've most recently updated it to include nicotine pouch resources. Next slide, please.

So the development of the Nicotine pouch fact sheets is a really good example of, how we use evidence, to practice. This diagram demonstrates how evidence is translated into action. So, the Generation Vape Research provides insights into emerging nicotine products, youth behaviours, and associated harms. These findings, are then used by New South Wales Health to develop policy and strategic responses.

And the evidence is then translated into practical outputs, such as a nicotine pouch fact sheets, and educational resources for young people, parents, and teachers. Ultimately, all these resources support increased awareness, prevention, and early intervention.

And when our New South Wales Health inspectors started to seize nicotine pouches from retail settings, we were able to work with the Generation Vape research team, who were really agile and responsive to including questions around nicotine pouches, so we could start to understand how young people encounter and experience these products.

So this evidence really helps us, to inform policy development, public health messaging, educational resources, and practical advice for young people, and the population across New South Wales. So we really value this collaboration with Generation Vape, and it was great to work with Cancer Council New South Wales, again, to create these, new resources.

Next slide, please.

So just to show you where you can see them in more detail, we're disseminating the fact sheets through multiple channels to ensure they reach audiences that are most affected by the products. We have a new webpage that's been created, which provides clear, evidence-based information about what nicotine pouches are, their health risks, the impact on young people, and their legal status in Australia. Importantly, it also hosts the fact sheets for young people, parents, carers, teachers, and school staff.

So the page has been linked to the Vaping toolkit, and we continue to promote the resources to key stakeholders, such as our local health districts, the Department of Education, and also oral health teams, all these resources available, to download from the web page, and we've also got hard copies available to order as well. So I encourage you all to have, a look at this new web page, and, and have a look at the resources in a bit more detail. And I'll hand back, I think, to Ciara? Or, Emily?

Emily Jenkinson: Thanks, Lauren. I think we're going to, finish there and pass back to the Positive Choices team.

Tara Guckel: Thanks so much, everyone. I'll just have to get you to stop sharing screen. Wonderful.

Yeah, thanks so much, Emily, Ciara and Lauren. That was really informative and, you know, great context and background to kind of the landscape of nicotine pouches at the moment, but then also the new resources and fact sheets that your teams have been developing.

And we thought we'd hopefully end, just before we get to the Q&A, on some practical tips, that hopefully, if you're concerned, maybe, about a young person who is using nicotine pouches, that you can take away, yeah, some of these things are having a conversation with a young person, so... This kind of guide is based on some of the other information we have on the Positive Choices website, if you are concerned about a young person's alcohol and other drug use, and then also some of the resources that we have, about having a conversation around vaping or e-cigarettes, and we have some links that I'll also share on a later slide. So if you are concerned about a young person and their potential, nicotine pouch use.

The first step is just preparing yourself for the conversation. So, you know, attending a webinar like this, or researching, some of the information and fact sheets and some of

the resources that we'll share is a really great way to be prepared to have that conversation, and particularly for any questions that the young person might come to you with.

And when it comes to having the conversation, it's really important to avoid being judgmental or confrontational, and I know this can be very, very difficult, but listening to the young person and sort of problem-solving together will make it more likely to get through to that person and kind of understand where they're coming from, or their potential motives for why they have been, using nicotine pouches.

And it's also important to convey that change is possible, and you can kind of discuss barriers that the young person might be facing, or again, those motivations for why they started using in the first place. Is it, you know, peer influence, or are there other factors kind of at play there as well? And then... You know, as it's kind of been touched, the Nicotine dependence is a concern in this kind of space, and there's also support for helping young people quit, which you might want to utilise if there are those concerns of nicotine dependence, depending on potentially how much the young person has been using, you know, nicotine products. So, there's Quitline and the My Quit Buddy app, and there's a lot of, other resources out, online for how to kind of support a person with nicotine dependence, or help with things such as craving as well.

And then another common thing, or thing that might be good to do for parents and school communities, it's also valuable to correct common myths around nicotine pouches, so some of these were touched on during the presentation.

And I think a really important one to highlight that's an important factor in alcohol and other drug prevention and education more broadly is correcting the misconception that, sort of, everyone's doing it. And as we've seen today, most young people are not using nicotine pouches. So, you know, among that 14 to 17-year-old age group, those high school kind of students, it's quite a low percentage, so around 2%. And some other common myths that you might need to address, or, you know, touch on if you are having a conversation with a young person. There might be that myth that, you know, nicotine pouches are safe or harmless, but, you know, as has been touched on, there's a number of, you know, health-related harms, and also nicotine is an addictive substance that can negatively have health impacts, particularly during developing adolescent brain period.

There's also that myth that nicotine pouches are not addictive, so they can and do contain high levels of nicotine, making them highly addictive and increasing the risk of nicotine dependence. And another common myth that might be, talked about is, yeah, nicotine patches help people quit smoking or vaping, but unfortunately, at the moment, there's currently insufficient evidence to conclude that nicotine patches are an effective smoking or vaping cessation tool, and are not currently recommended for that.

And then we just wanted to include some links that you'll get shared around as well when you receive the slides, so I've included the links to the fact sheets that the team spoke about, and also just a blog post that Positive Choices did, a little while ago, and what we know about nicotine pouches currently.

And then I've linked some conversation guides on how to talk to a young person. Obviously, these ones are kind of centred around vaping or e-cigarettes, because there aren't specific conversation guides for nicotine pouches at the moment, but a lot of the learnings from these can be taken. And then also, in terms of nicotine dependence and quit support, there are other resources out there as well.

So thank you very much again to Emily, Ciara and Lauren for the really informative presentation. I'll invite you all to come back off, put your cameras back on, and yeah, I encourage the audience to ask any questions. I can see some have already come through to the Q&A now, and I'll stop sharing my screen so I can see you all.

So the first question that would come through, which I think is a good one to touch on, is how much do these products typically cost?

Emily Jenkinson: Sure, I can answer that one. We actually, as a little Cancer Council activity. We went up... our office is based in Kings Cross in New South Wales, and we actually went, on a bit of a lunchtime expedition to a couple of the convenience stores that we knew were selling, products, and typically pouches can range from about \$10 to around \$40, depending on the pack size and the strength, so, similar to vaping products, they're quite, accessible, and I guess that range, you know, especially starting down at, you know, around the \$10 to \$15 mark is something that, is a bit of a concern, because a young person might be able to afford that sort of price point. Yeah, good question.

Tara Guckel: Definitely, and I think in comparison to, kind of, some of the e-cigarette and vaping products as well, they are a much cheaper alternative. And then we have a question here that says, what collaboration is being undertaken with other state or territory health departments to ensure a consistent and national approach?

Lauren Kinsella: That one's probably me. So with the Vaping toolkit, we have actually licensed that to lots of jurisdictions across Australia, and that includes the nicotine pouch resources as well. So, you know, there's not a set national approach, but, we're... we really aim to share, what we do have in New South Wales.

Tara Guckel: Absolutely, and Lauren, those resources, the fact sheets, they're quite, you know, they're not really jurisdiction-specific anyway, so it's really valuable.

Lauren Kinsella: Yeah, and if needed, they can be adapted by jurisdictions to be relevant as well.

Tara Guckel: Great. And then there's another question here that says, have you considered providing resources about the difference between nicotine patches and nicotine pouches? I know there was a fair bit of media that was confusing the two products and their uses.

Lauren Kinsella: We haven't as yet, but it's... it's a good point. So, yeah, definitely something to consider.

Tara Guckel: And I think people are starting to learn a bit more about, you know, nicotine pouches themselves as a product. I think there has been just more media in general about them. And then we have another question here, sort of about another, state. So, have you licensed to Queensland Health, and what would be the process, if not yet? Who do we reach out to?

Lauren Kinsella: Yep, they can reach out to, the tobacco team at New South Wales Health, so, yep, and we can assist with that inquiry.

Tara Guckel: Great. And then we've got a question in the chat that says, is there any training that you know that's available for GPs so they can give relevant information to young people on this topic?

Lauren Kinsella: Yeah, probably, me again. So, yeah, we, we do work, with, you know, clinicians, across New South Wales, around nicotine dependence and quit support. So, we do have engagement with RACGP, on... on that, and also, yep. Like, smoking cessation training as well.

Tara Guckel: Definitely

Lauren Kinsella: I could only speak to New South Wales on that one.

Tara Guckel: And then we have a question here. I know we talked, yeah, we're focused on nicotine pouches, but there's also tobacco pouches, but then we've got a question around chewing tobacco. Could you suggest any research from Indigenous communities in Australia related to chewing tobacco that you might know of?

Emily Jenkinson: Hi, thanks for your question. I can see that in the chat. I'm not aware of any research, just because it's... we've mainly been looking at, pouch use and vaping among young people, but, it's a good question. I'm not sure if anybody else has come across any research in that space.

Tara Guckel: Yeah, I think the Positive Choices team has done... I was gonna say, less the chewing tobaccos of it, sorry, Ciara.

Ciara Madigan: Oh, no, I was just gonna, yeah, agree with you, Em and Tara. We did definitely have to put in strong parameters around our, literature review and environmental scan to just focus on nicotine pouches, but would be really keen to see, yeah, others do, more focused work on chewing tobacco, and yeah.

Tara Guckel: And then we've got a question here in the Q&A that says, how correct is the marketed nicotine content in pouches? As we know, vapes are often sold as no nicotine, and that there is an amount of nicotine present. Given they are illegal, is there any marketing control of content?

Lauren Kinsella: No, there's not at this stage. So, we do know, that there's variability, between the products, and that there's... in Australia, there's no, none have been evaluated for quality, safety, standards at the moment.

Tara Guckel: Quite similar to, yeah, the e-cigarette and vaping market, like the comment said. And then we've got another question here that says, are there plans for meshing guides to help emphasise the difference between conventional nicotine replacement therapy and pouches, or illicit unregulated gum, such as Alibaba gums?

Lauren Kinsella: Sorry, can you say the question again, Tara?

Tara Guckel: No worries, yeah. Any messaging, guys, to kind of help emphasise the difference between conventional nicotine replacement therapies and pouches, or those kind of unregulated gums, such as those get on Alibaba?

Lauren Kinsella: Right, yeah, I mean, the suggestion will be to contact, you know, the Quitline for advice on appropriate, you know, NRT solutions on that one, and obviously the Alibaba ones are illegal in Australia as well, so...

Tara Guckel: And then we've got a question that came through in the chat earlier that said, what is the messaging around nicotine pouches for people looking to maintain nicotine use with harm minimisation, or for people that are looking at reducing nicotine usage? Nicotine pouches seemed like a good alternative to smoking, vaping, etc.

Emily Jenkinson: I can take that one. Lauren, give you a bit of a break, but I guess to that question, currently there's no studies, so there's insufficient evidence around nicotine pouches for a cessation tool, and there's also, I suppose, just the risks that pouches might serve as a bit of an on-ramp for nicotine use, particularly among young people or people that aren't already using, nicotine or tobacco products, not an off-ramp. But I guess the advice around, quitting smoking, vaping, or any other sort of nicotine product is to speak with a health professional, or to call the quit line, where there are trained advisors to kind of give you support you might need to quit.

Emily Jenkinson: And there are also, other proven effective nicotine replacement therapy options that have actually gone through that, process with the TGA, and, you know, are proven, effective. So things like, lozenges or gum or, patches, as someone's brought up, you know, making sure we emphasise the A in patches, not pouches, but yeah, there's other options that have gone through those safety and quality testing measures that we have in place.

Tara Guckel: And particularly as such a new and emerging product, there's still those long-term harms that we're still, yeah, working out, and there just isn't the research in that space yet. Hmm. And then, yeah, we just kind of have a bit of a comment that's saying it'd be great to see a national approach in this area. This person's from WA saying they haven't heard or seen anything specific from the WA Department of Health on this aspect of substance use. So, again, it seems like some states and territories are kind of leading the way, kind of, in this space, but yeah, a national approach would be great to see. And then I've just seen another comment come through in our question, in the chat saying, some had mouth and throat cancers that they have later found out the outcome was because of regular use, or habitual, or some tube beetle leaf, and add this additional product to help them to give that satisfaction. So again, kind of those oral health consequences that, are being observed. And we've still got a little bit of time for questions. If anyone else has anything. We've kind of covered the ones that have come through so far. Otherwise, Emily, Ciara and Lauren, feel free to add anything else that, you know, you might have wanted to touch on in the presentation, or the Q&A has maybe, you know, sparked you mentioning.

But otherwise, I might... Share my screen again, just to kind of finish off. Oh, someone's just asking again, yeah, you will receive a copy of the slides, emailed to you within about 24 hours as well. So, thank you so much, everyone, again, for joining today's presentation. We really value all three of you, coming to present as well. It's been a really great information session on this kind of emerging area that I know the Positive Choices team has been getting questions about as well. So, thank you very much, everyone, and we hope you have a lovely afternoon.

Thank you.