
Dear Committee Secretariat,

Re: Select Committee on Tobacco Harm Reduction

We have noticed that the attached submission references our work. It refers to data from our 'smoking in England' project and our 'important report'. The authors present a simple graph and argue it 'show[s] that the role of e-cigarettes in accelerating the downward trend in England is trivial or non-existent.' That interpretation of the graph is scientifically invalid. We have published the correct analyses of the data in peer-reviewed journals, including The BMJ. The papers (listed below) make it clear why, as is very often the case in public health research, it is not appropriate just to 'eyeball' trends but instead to undertake statistical analyses of the data. On the basis of the correct analyses, we concluded that people using e-cigarettes to quit smoking in England has led to tens of thousands of people stopping smoking each year since 2013 over and above what otherwise could have been expected.

<https://www.bmj.com/content/354/bmj.i4645>

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/add.14851>

The 2018 Public Health England report, to which we were contributors, arrived at the same conclusion:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/684963/Evidence_review_of_e-cigarettes_and_heated_tobacco_products_2018.pdf

Best wishes,

Professor Brown, Professor Shahab & Professor West

Jamie

--

Jamie Brown (PhD CPsychol)
Professor of Behavioural Science and Health
Director, Tobacco and Alcohol Research Group
University College London